

## ABSTRACT

Title of Document: CLASS BY THE GLASS: THE  
SIGNIFICANCE OF IMPORTED WINE  
CONSUMPTION IN AMERICA, 1750-1800

Catherine Stewart Thomas, Master of Arts, 2007

Directed By: Associate Professor Mary Corbin Sies,  
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This paper analyses the ritual of imported wine consumption in America between 1750 and 1800 and its significance in establishing a wealthy gentleman's power and place within a social hierarchy. My research was conducted by exploring contemporary written and visual records, as well as examining material objects and architectural spaces, specifically pertaining to the Annapolis, Maryland region.

Beginning with a study of the varieties of wines consumed and their influence in the politically-charged environment prior to the American Revolution, the paper then explores why and how gentlemen used wine bibbing as an indication of one's identity in a burgeoning society. Quantities of wine-related furniture and decorative objects, in combination with architectural storage spaces, conveyed a life far above that of the average citizen. Finally, this paper examines to what degree historic house museums are interpreting the wine ritual and suggests steps that might be taken to do so more effectively.

CLASS BY THE GLASS: THE SIGNIFICANCE OF IMPORTED WINE  
CONSUMPTION IN AMERICA, 1750-1800

By

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## Dedication

To my parents:

You instilled in me a love of learning, and especially, a love of history. For that I will be eternally grateful.

And to my husband, Jeff:

I would never have completed this project without your endless encouragement and patience. Thank you for your unfailing support.

## Acknowledgements

There are so many individuals I wish to thank that it would be impossible to include everyone here. My advisor, Associate Professor Mary Sies at the University of Maryland, completely shaped my graduate school experience. For her thought-provoking classes and her endless advice, I will always be grateful. I would also like to thank Jeff Burnett, Barbara Carson, and Paul Shackel for reading drafts of this paper and for offering helpful criticisms and suggestions.

Many colleagues have generously assisted me with this topic. I would particularly like to thank James A. Abbott for literally years of encouragement in pursuing this subject. Additionally, William Voss Elder III, MB Munford, Mark Letzer, and Catherine Arthur always thoughtfully shared information related to the subject of wine consumption.

In Annapolis, I would like to extend my appreciation to those who assisted me with local information: Tom Cuddy, Alexandra Deutsch, Heather Ersts, Heather Foster, Orlando Ridout V, Jean Russo, Paul Shackel, and Donna Ware. Researching the domestic architecture of Annapolis would have been impossible without the current residents of these magnificent houses. They generously opened their doors to me so that I could crawl around their basements and attics. Architectural historians Edward Chappell, Willie Graham, and Mark Wenger were also helpful in suggesting locations of possible wine cellars or garrets.

Finally, I was assisted by independent scholars both in the United States and Britain, as well as staff at many cultural institutions. I have thanked certain individuals within the body of the paper but many others suggested objects or written materials that did not fit into the scope of this paper. I will focus on these pieces as I continue to research the subject.

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## Introduction

This paper examines how the ritualistic consumption of imported wine, long overlooked for its influential role in colonial society, established a gentleman's power and place within a social hierarchy. Although the elite group that practiced this wine-bibbing ritual prospered from approximately 1740 until 1865, from the Colonial era to the Civil War, for the purposes of this paper, I will concentrate on the practices of this ritual during the years of 1750 to 1800.<sup>1</sup> During that time, gentlemen considered wine drinking a serious sport with a detailed protocol that included the necessary possession of elaborate accessories associated with wine's consumption. These objects as individual pieces did not always play a significant role as status markers on their own. Rather, they created an impressive visual effect when acting together to complete the ritual within a social setting. If one had an extensive wine cellar in quantity and quality, the correct accoutrements to highlight the wine, and the knowledge of how to handle these objects, he could claim a certain position in society.

Wine drinking was as important for establishing the perception of social hierarchy among men as the well-known act of drinking tea was for women; however, wine is often disregarded for the magnitude of what it symbolized in colonial America.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Further discussion on the specifics of this date range will be provided later in this introduction.

<sup>2</sup> Men participated in tea drinking as well, but the tea ritual played more of a symbolic role in the lives of women – much like the symbolic role of wine drinking in the gentlemen's lives. Women did drink a glass or two of wine with men during dinner, but the majority of the wine was consumed after the women had withdrawn from the table. Women, however, were not exempt from conspicuous consumption, and tea drinking was their way of demonstrating their position within society. For

Imported wine, or the equipage associated with it, is frequently mentioned as an example within a broader discussion of colonial American life, but rarely has it been examined by itself for the noteworthy part it played in creating the definition of a “gentleman” in eighteenth and early nineteenth-century America. Drinking wine was a form of “symbolic, active and communicative” behavior that was appreciated, interpreted, and judged by people of all economic backgrounds.<sup>3</sup>

Although each aspect of the wine-drinking ritual encompasses a varied number of academic areas, the actual subject of this paper, the after-dinner consumption of imported wine within the home, is quite narrow. It would be inaccurate to categorize all drinking situations, or even all wine-drinking situations, as one. Rather a broad variety of spirits were consumed, and, indeed, other types of wine were available as well. Furthermore, individuals, many of whom could not afford imported wine, attempted to grow indigenous grapes for their own use, and wine was frequently an ingredient in punch, another popular early American beverage. However, each of these topics is large enough in its own right to deserve separate consideration.

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information on tea consumption, see: Rodris Roth, “Tea-Drinking in Eighteenth-Century America: Its Etiquette and Equipage,” in *Material Life in America*, ed. Robert Blair St. George (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1988); Rupert Faulkner, ed., *Tea: East and West* (London: Victoria and Albert Museum, 2003); Edward Wenham, “Tea and Tea Things in England,” *Antiques* 54 (October 1948); Peter B. Brown, *In Praise of Hot Liquors: The Study of Chocolate, Coffee, and Tea-Drinking 1600-1850* (York, York Civic Trust, 1995); and William H. Ukers, *The Romance of Tea: An Outline History of Tea and Tea-Drinking Though Sixteen Hundred Years* (New York: Knopf, 1936).

<sup>3</sup> Ann Smart Martin and J. Ritchie Garrison Garrison, “Shaping the Field: The Multidisciplinary Perspectives of Material Culture,” in *American Material Culture: The Shape of the Field*, ed. Ann Smart Martin and J. Ritchie Garrison Garrison (Knoxville: Distributed by University of Tennessee Press for Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum, 1997), 14-15. They are referring to Ian Hodder’s work, *Reading the Past: Current Approaches to Interpretation in Archaeology* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1986), especially Chapter 7: “Contextual Archaeology.” Crew members, dock workers, merchants, craftsmen, and servants were all aware of the quantities and types of wine and wine-related equipage that were either being imported or made to be used during wine-consuming rituals.

Furthermore, wine bibbing within domestic settings warrants its own specific discussion because, unlike other types of consumption, the wine ritual was vital in establishing the identity of many of these gentlemen.

Even though imported wine consumption occurred throughout the colonies and early states, I have focused on the geographic area of Annapolis, Maryland as a case study. For the purposes of broadening my arguments, as well as offering plausibility and discrepancy checks to the Annapolis research, I draw upon supporting evidence (written, visual, and artifactual) from other regions along the East Coast during the same time periods. Furthermore, there seemed to be little change in the overall importance and popularity of the wine consumption ritual during the hundred year span of 1750 to 1850, so I have also included information, as well as primary sources, from just before and after my fifty-year focus.

Comprehending the power of this pastime requires scrutiny of each element of the ritual, all the while keeping in mind the dialectical relationship between the objects and their users. Individuals cannot be defined apart from the objects they used, and, likewise, objects cannot be defined apart from the people who used them. When examining history, researchers must keep in mind that material artifacts were intentional and were active players within their context. The scholar Jules Prown once stated that “objects made or modified by man reflect, consciously or unconsciously, directly or indirectly, the beliefs of the individuals who made, commissioned, or used

them and, by extension, the beliefs of the larger society to which they belonged.”<sup>4</sup>

With regard to wine bibbing, the related “objects” include both architecture and the vast array of equipage necessary for the activity, as well as written narratives and fine arts.

An individual’s desire for status, successfully conveyed through the possession of necessary accoutrements for the consumption of wine, prompted the creation of beautifully designed and lavishly produced decorative items. While the gentry were hardly the only Americans to consume alcohol,<sup>5</sup> their affluence and awareness of the prominence conveyed by material goods promoted the production of these aesthetically significant decorative objects and extravagant architectural spaces. Since the equipage acted as both an economic and a social marker, it validated the owner as much as the owner validated the equipage through its utilization. Because of this, British archaeologist Ian Hodder believes that each object has a symbolic meaning only when examined in a specific context along with other related objects. No one piece of this ritual can be examined in a vacuum.<sup>6</sup>

In **Chapter One**, I detail the specific types of wine imported into the colonies and the history of America’s early attempts to grow indigenous grapes for wine production. I further argue that the ritual of importing and consuming wine produced structures of

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<sup>4</sup> Jules David Prown, “Mind in Matter,” in *Material Life in America 1600-1860*, ed. Robert Blair St. George (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1988), 17-18.

<sup>5</sup> The lower classes favored cheaper beer, hard cider, and especially rum. Barbados molasses was exported to New England where the first commercial rum distillery opened in Boston in 1700 (Andrew Barr, *Drink: A Social History of America* (New York: Carroll & Graf Publishers, Inc., 1999), 35.)

<sup>6</sup> Ian Hodder, *Reading the Past: Current Approaches to Interpretation in Archaeology* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 140.

power that were of particular relevance to the relationships and ideals of an emerging country's ideology.<sup>7</sup> The partiality these gentlemen showed towards certain varieties of imported wine clashed with the British desire to control trade and importation and ultimately led to wine being viewed as another metaphor for taxation without representation.

**Chapter Two** examines how and why wine consumption helped these gentlemen identify themselves as genteel, even if that meant acting in a very unattractive manner. The complete ritual can be understood on both a private level, which involved one's individual hobbies and preferences, as well as on a more public level, with an established social meaning.<sup>8</sup> Even the public aspect of wine bibbing was, in fact, not very public but instead purposively intimate and quite controlled. Typically, it occurred in one room, the dining room, of a private house with a select number of visiting gentlemen. The choice of who was to be included provided a visible indication of group identity, for the host in a private home could be much more selective in assembling the participants compared to a self-forming group in a club or tavern. Each aspect of wine bibbing communicated a visual and behavioral language. The character of these gentlemen was based on their choices of material objects and their performance in "using" these items when in each other's company. Diary and letter notations, as well as visual images of wine consumption are of specific interest

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<sup>7</sup> "Ritual is an opportunity to affirm, evoke, assign, or revise the conventional symbols and meanings of the cultural order." (McCracken, Grant David, *Culture and Consumption: New Approaches to the Symbolic Character of Consumer Goods and Activities* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990), 84). Mary Douglas describes a ritual as a form of restricted code and a "system of control as well as a system of communication." (*Natural Symbols* (London: Barrie and Jenkins, 1973) 78-79).

<sup>8</sup> Anne Yentsch and Larry McKee, "Footprints of Buildings in Eighteenth-Century Annapolis," *American Archaeology* 6, no. 1 (1987): 41-42.

in this chapter, since they accurately illustrate the complicated meanings associated with this ritual.

**Chapters Three and Four** concentrate on the specific objects, equipage and architecture respectively, involved in wine consumption. Not only did wine bibbing involve the use of many small, yet elaborate, pieces of material culture, it also affected the way certain spaces were used within domestic architecture in order for wines to be properly stored. Scholars on relations between culture and economy, such as Cary Carson and Don Slater, argue that consumer culture was a reality in America long before the Industrial Revolution and had a profound effect on this country's image of itself; "it is commerce that provides so many of the new images and concepts through which society is understood and through which consumption is recognized and revalued in ways that bear the mark of what we now call consumer culture: notions of economy and government, the idea of civil society and of society itself, images of the self, self-interest, reason and desire, new concepts of status and culture."<sup>9</sup> In truth, the emphasis on objects and consumption in the eighteenth century "reconfigured the definition of a gentleman, previously associated with family origins, inherited income, extensive land holdings, and an important country seat."<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Don Slater, *Consumer Culture and Modernity* (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 1997), 21. Cary Carson also writes about this premise in Cary Carson, "The Consumer Revolution in Colonial America: Why Demand?" ed. Cary Carson, Ronald Hoffman, and Peter J. Albert (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1994).

<sup>10</sup> Phyllis Whitman Hunter, *Purchasing Identity in the Atlantic World: Massachusetts Merchants, 1670-1780* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001), 4. Hunter's main premise is that the merchants themselves played a significant role in shaping this new society. More needs to be studied of this subject with regard to the ritual of wine consumption. See also David Hancock, "Markets, Merchants, and the Wider World of Boston Wine, 1700-1775" in *Entrepreneurs: The Boston Community* ed. Conrad Edick Wright and Kathryn P. Viens (1997) and Edward Papenfuss, *In Pursuit of Profit: The Annapolis Merchants in the Era of the American Revolution* (1975).

In **Chapter Five**, I assess how this important ritual is currently portrayed in the historic house museum setting. Preserving early American domestic architecture is truly successful when all aspects of the house are conserved, especially the attics and cellars where much of the behind-the-scenes activity occurred. The stories of these houses and the people who lived in them cannot be told exclusively in the elegant dining rooms. Rather, the social history of a house needs to be interpreted in areas such as its storage spaces where food provisions were kept and where servants spent hours attending to the daily responsibilities of their position, including decanting wine.

By examining the nature of this ritual from an interdisciplinary perspective, the conclusions of this paper directly apply to the studies of a diverse group of scholars. Cultural anthropologists, material culture specialists, and social historians are able to better understand a vast array of factors relating to everyday life in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, including material culture, commodities and consumption, rituals, foodways, status markers and class, etiquette, gender, socialization, and space as a sense of place. In particular, they will see how gentlemen used this consumption ritual to create or sustain a place for themselves among the upper ranks of society. Wine bibbing was a vehicle men of a certain wealth used to bond with their peers and to separate themselves from those deemed less aristocratic.

#### Case Study Methodology

With regard to the case study, I focus on Annapolis because it was a vital town at the height of its glory by the mid-eighteenth century. Surviving evidence of the types of trade that occurred in Annapolis, the variety of objects that were made there, and the elegant houses that were constructed indicate that the day-to-day life in this town was similar to that in larger urban areas along the coast, such as Boston, New York, Philadelphia, and Charleston. Annapolis residents were interested in the latest fashions from abroad and were successfully establishing their town as a major cultural center. Many of the local elite constructed large urban residences showcasing their upwardly mobile lifestyle. However, Annapolis was unable to sustain itself as a major cultural hub; thus it seemed appropriate to focus this paper on the time period just before and after its golden age (1750 to 1800). There were discrepancies in the Annapolitans' handling of wine compared to other locations, perhaps due in part to the town's small size and its brief time in the spotlight. I discuss these throughout the paper. Additionally, by including the Revolutionary War years in the scope of this project, I show that such a major historical event had little impact on the wine-drinking habits of wealthy gentlemen. For, although there was a decline in accessibility of wine during the war years, wine consumption increased again immediately following the end of the War.

In addition to examining wine-related objects and architecture associated with residents of Annapolis, I turned towards probate inventories for hard evidence of the types of wine and accoutrements the gentlemen of this town were actively acquiring. Researching these documents proved to be somewhat challenging. Below I will



describe the various obstacles, which made it impossible to take a completely broad and random sampling of estate probate records. I will then explain how I subsequently approached the research from various angles.

During much of the colonial period, Maryland's probate court was called the Prerogative Court. Until it was abolished in 1777, all probate records were recorded under this agency. Most counties kept duplicate records of their residents, except for Anne Arundel County. Thus, researchers must go through all of the Prerogative Court records (which do not have indexes) in order to locate Annapolis decedents prior to 1777. This made it virtually impossible for me to find enough listings for a systematic sampling. Even if I knew an individual's year of death, his probate record, if recorded at all, may have been taken or transcribed years later. Although I was not able to do a methodical sampling, I did find a handful of useful inventories for the first twenty-five years of my time-period.

Beginning with the Anne Arundel County inventories from 1777 to 1779, I randomly took three names from each letter of the alphabet listed in the index. I repeated this method (except by only sampling two names from each letter of the alphabet) for the years of 1787 to 1790. While I found interesting information in these records, subsequent books of inventories did not have indexes. Additionally, most inventories lacked specific addresses, so unless I could trace a name to a known residence within the town limits (an area referred to as the Annapolis Hundred), it was difficult to determine exactly where some of these individuals lived within the county.

In 1783 a Tax Assessment Record for the Annapolis Hundred was recorded. My observation of the inventories up to this point was that the number of pieces of wine equipage listed in an inventory was significantly higher if the record was of a gentleman whose name I recognized as being a wealthier individual, such as Edward Lloyd IV or Charles Carroll of Carrollton. For this reason, I took the name with the highest recorded value from each letter of the alphabet in the index of this 1783 document. However, out of twenty-six names, I was only able to locate inventories for two of these gentlemen upon their deaths.

When it became obvious that finding enough relevant inventories to analyze for my case study on Annapolis was going to be difficult, I changed my strategy to locate as many probate records as possible for the wealthiest individuals in the town. I compiled a list of preferred gentlemen by approaching my definition of elite status from a number of angles. Because it is widely accepted by scholars that the building of elegant houses was often considered a mark of class distinction in the eighteenth century, I included the names of the men who built stately homes in Annapolis during my date range.<sup>11</sup> I then added additional names from two sources. One was the Gunston Hall Probate Inventory Database, which contains transcribed inventories from individuals in early Maryland and Virginia ([www.gunstonhall.org](http://www.gunstonhall.org)). The second

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<sup>11</sup> I am grateful to Gregory Weidman for sharing with me the location at the Maryland State Archives of the inventories for some of these gentlemen.

source was a list compiled by Lois Carr and Lorena Walsh of Annapolis residents, their year of death, and their overall worth.<sup>12</sup>

The names I pulled from the Carr and Walsh list each had an estate worth a minimum of 500 pounds. I used this value because, according to Edward Papenfuse, an average assessed wealth over 500 pounds made an Annapolis man a gentleman, a member of the upper class.<sup>13</sup> The difference between an estate of 500 pounds and 3,000 pounds (the average of the wealthier individuals mentioned in this document)<sup>14</sup>, however, is significant by eighteenth-century standards. In my assessment, an individual whose worth was 500 pounds may, in reality, have been considered more of what scholar Barbara Carson would label as an aspiring member of society rather than an elite member. In a study of early nineteenth-century Washington, DC inventories, Carson counted table settings. Those with the most were labeled “elite.” Decedents with fewer were called “aspiring.” The elite gave dinner parties for eighteen, twenty-four or more. The aspiring could accommodate eight, ten, or twelve.<sup>15</sup> Although I did not

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<sup>12</sup> The list includes inventories dated from 1699 to 1774. Over the course of their careers, Carr and Walsh have studied literally thousands of probate records in the Chesapeake region. For a more in-depth description of their methodology in analyzing Maryland inventories, see: Carr and Walsh, “Inventories and the Analysis of Wealth and Consumption Patterns in St. Mary’s County, Maryland, 1658-1777.” *Historical Methods* (13) no. 2 Spring 1980. The same authors included the Anne Arundel County inventories in their article, “Changing Lifestyles and Consumer Behavior in the Colonial Chesapeake,” in *Of Consuming Interests*, ed. Cary Carson, 1994. I am very grateful to Paul Shackel at the University of Maryland and Jean Russo at Historic Annapolis Foundation for assisting me with this list.

<sup>13</sup> Edward C. Papenfuse, *In Pursuit of Profit: The Annapolis Merchants in the Era of the American Revolution, 1763-1805* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1975), 139. These gentlemen made up 20% of the heads of households in Annapolis but controlled 49% of the wealth of the town. (Ibid.) Carr & Walsh establish their wealth parameters a little lower than Papenfuse.

<sup>14</sup> This average does not take into account the assessed value of Edward Lloyd IV’s because it was so far above that of the rest of Annapolis society. His estate was assigned a value of 38,785 pounds.

<sup>15</sup> Barbara Carson’s model derives from her study, *Ambitious Appetites: Dining, Behavior, and Patterns of Consumption in Federal Washington* (1990). This ranking conformed well with Robert Roberts distinction between great and little people. Robert Roberts was a butler who wrote the etiquette book *The House Servant’s Directory* (1827). See more on Roberts in Chapter 3 of this paper.

clearly define each household according to Carson's model, the concept is relevant to my arguments since entertaining was an important component to the wine consumption ritual as well as to the overall ability of an eighteenth-century gentleman to claim himself as "genteel." For the most part, there did seem to be a direct correlation between the number of pieces of silverware an individual owned and the number of wine glasses listed in the inventories. Most of the gentlemen, who had an impressive amount of wine in their cellars, also had a significant number of wine glasses in which to serve the beverage to their contemporaries. A drawback, which Carson fully acknowledges, is that the numbers of forks, knives, plates, or wine glasses in an inventory do not help to answer the question of how food and beverages were consumed.<sup>16</sup> The how and why of wine consumption are questions I attempt to answer in this paper.

In the end, the inventories I located that listed a considerable amount of wine equipage and a large supply of wine in storage belonged to gentlemen whose wealth was above 1,800 pounds, and I considered most of these individuals to be part of the elite. The distinction between wealth and class is a very difficult issue to approach. *The Dictionary of the History of Ideas* states that definition of class varies depending on whether power, wealth, or relationships are emphasized.<sup>17</sup> Class, in my opinion, is related to all of these things. It is not only tied to one's wealth, but is also associated with culture and the perceived notions of gentility. Lois Carr and Lorena Walsh state

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<sup>16</sup> Barbara G. Carson, *Ambitious Appetites: Dining, Behavior, and Patterns of Consumption in Federal Washington* (DC: The American Institute of Architects Press, 1990), 36-37.

<sup>17</sup> Philip P. Wiener, ed., *The Dictionary of the History of Ideas: Studies of Selected Pivotal Ideas* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1973-4). The electronic version of this book is maintained by the University of Virginia Library and can be found at <http://etext.virginia.edu/DicHist/dict.html>.

in their article “Changing Lifestyles and Consumer Behavior in the Colonial Chesapeake” that the “culture of gentility became a means of emphasizing social differences and fueling social competition...By the 1760s the social position of anyone could be gauged not just by wealth or offices held but by their dress, household arrangements, and social ceremonies.”<sup>18</sup> Most of the men mentioned in this paper are well-known individuals who are universally regarded as having been part of the upper class society due to a number of factors, including their wealth, their family associations, or their role within the political and civic society in which they lived. In order to define them as elite for the purposes of this study, one question I posed was whether or not they needed to possess a full range of equipage to participate in the symbolic wine-drinking ritual. It was quite apparent that these individuals typically owned a certain critical grouping of objects, consisting of multiple wine glasses, a few decanters, and generally one or two bottle stands or waiters. However, I ultimately concluded that having a full range did not need to be a defining factor for a number of reasons. First, since there were so many accoutrements associated with this activity, it is hard to clearly define what would be considered a full range. Second, it is impossible to determine if certain objects of value (in this study, specifically wine-related objects) were excluded from probate inventories for any number of reasons, including to undervalue the estate. As Camille Wells notes in her review of a historic house exhibition, “inventories can mislead as often as they enlighten: They are ‘snapshots’ taken by appraisers on one or two days in the life of a domestic scene that

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<sup>18</sup> Lois Carr and Lorena Walsh, "Changing Lifestyles and Consumer Behavior in the Colonial Chesapeake," in *Of Consuming Interests: The Style of Life in the Eighteenth Century*, ed. Cary Carson, Ronald Hoffman, and Peter J. Albert (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1994), 61.

almost certainly coalesced over decades.”<sup>19</sup> Additionally, records indicate that few wealthy individuals in any part of the East Coast possessed every possible wine-related object.

Although various aspects of the wine-bibbing ritual have been examined or discussed briefly in other studies of consumption and consumerism, no one has taken a comprehensive look at the practice in its entirety, nor to the extent it deserves. Wines and drinking on the whole are addressed in sources such as: Andrew Barr, *Drink: A Social History* (1999); Bradley Brooks, *The Social Functions of Alcohol in Eighteenth-Century Maryland* (Master’s Thesis, 1988); Eric Burns, *The Spirits of America: A Social History of Alcohol* (2004); Richard Hooker, *Food and Drink in America* (1999); and Peter Thompson, ““The Friendly Glass:” Drink and Gentility in Philadelphia” (1989). David Hancock has also written quite extensively on Madeira wine and its significance in eighteenth-century commerce (see bibliography). All of these authors provide information on the history of imported wine in this country, including some of the social and commercial implications of consumption, but none discuss the specifics of the ritual itself.

Additional sources on consumption and commerce include: Cary Carson et al., *Of Consuming Interests: The Style of Life in the Eighteenth Century* (1994); Phyllis Hunter, *Purchasing Identity in the Atlantic World: Massachusetts Merchants, 1670-1780* (2001); Edward Papenfuse, *In Pursuit of Profit: The Annapolis Merchants in the*

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<sup>19</sup> Camille Wells, "How Do We Know? Recreating Domestic Interiors," *Winterthur Portfolio* 36, no. 1 (2001): 43.

*Era of the American Revolution* (1975); and Don Slater, *Consumer Culture and Modernity* (1997).<sup>20</sup> All of these scholars' works greatly assisted me in thinking about the growing level of consumption in the eighteenth century and the reasons for this shift. Their writings encouraged me ask (and attempt to answer) the question: why? The entire text in *Of Consuming Interests* is pertinent to my work, but I wish to make note of two articles in particular. Lois Carr and Lorena Walsh in their piece "Changing Lifestyles and Consumer Behavior" chose twelve amenities or items that either made life more comfortable or advertised social status. They then tracked the presence or absence of these items in Chesapeake probate inventories. Neither wine nor any of its accoutrements were included as one of the amenities (tea is not either but is mentioned as an additional amenity). This is yet another indication that wine may have been overlooked in the past for its symbolic role in the eighteenth-century consumer culture. Cary Carson, in his culminating section of the book entitled "The Consumer Revolution in Colonial America: Why Demand?," states that social historians need to put their energies into figuring out what importance people gave to artifacts, in particular how their possessions defined status. He also notes that we have not adequately studied the important event of dining, which needs to be addressed since the rituals that occurred at the dinner table "became the earliest fully developed and most frequently practiced form of social interaction among genteel

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<sup>20</sup> Other helpful sources on consumerism include Celia Lury, *Consumer Culture* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1996); Ann Smart Martin, "Makers, Buyers, and Users: Consumerism as a Material Culture Framework," *Winterthur Portfolio* 28, no. 2/3 (1993); Grant McCracken, *Culture and Consumption: New Approaches to the Symbolic Character of Consumer Goods and Activities* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988); Lorna Weatherill, *Consumer Behavior and Material Culture in Britain, 1660-1760* (London: Routledge, 1988); and Neil McKendrick, John Brewer, and J.H. Plumb, *The Birth of a Consumer Society: The Commercialization of Eighteenth-Century England* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982).

friends and acquaintances.”<sup>21</sup> In this paper, I have attempted to analyze one aspect of dining: the wine ritual.

Wine-related equipage is mentioned within broader texts on dining or other social rituals, such as in: Diane Berger, “*Pray Let Them Be Neat and Fashionable or Send None*”: *Dining in Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century America* (Master’s Thesis, 1990); Barbara Carson, *Ambitious Appetites: Dining, Behavior, and Patterns of Consumption in Federal Washington* (1990); and Elisabeth Garrett’s works on *The Home* (1990) and *The Dining Room* (1984).<sup>22</sup> These texts assisted me in analyzing the roles material objects played in history and how we, as scholars, need to constantly look beyond their utilitarian functions.

Finally, Richard Bushman has written on ritual, refinement, and culture in “American High-Style and Vernacular Cultures” (1984) and *The Refinement of America* (1992). His work encouraged me to expand my argument of how the wine ritual was a vehicle for the social elite to distance themselves from other factions of society. Paul Shackel’s *Personal Discipline and Material Culture: An Archaeology of Annapolis, Maryland, 1695-1870* (1993) was also helpful as it uses an archaeologist’s approach to emphasize how material culture, etiquette, and ritual worked together in early Annapolis to form power relations. After examining these and many additional sources, it appears that all the aspects of the wine-drinking ritual have not previously

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<sup>21</sup> Carson, “The Consumer Revolution in Colonial America: Why Demand?” 604.

<sup>22</sup> For additional sources on material culture see Daniel Miller, ed., *Material Cultures: Why Some Things Matter* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998); and Ann Smart Martin and J. Richie Garrison, ed., *American Material Culture: The Shape of the Field*, (Winterthur, DE: Henry Francis de Pont Winterthur Museum, 1997).



been examined together, including the related elements of domestic architecture and the need for interpretation of the activity within the historic house museum setting.

It is relevant and necessary for historians to take into account the consumption ritual involving imported wine, for it exhibited an enormous amount of power in early America: power in terms of hierarchy of space, material objects, and valuable time allocated for the study, care, and handling of the beverage. But questions still need to be addressed regarding wine. Specifically, why did these gentlemen need a drink to define themselves? Why did they consume it in a particular way? Furthermore, is it possible that wine may have been the most powerful beverage in colonial America? Through an examination of various forms of evidence, I will establish that, if not the most powerful, imported wine was certainly exceedingly influential in a burgeoning new society.

## Chapter 1: Wines and Consumption

“Wine is constant proof that God loves us and loves to see us happy”  
– Benjamin Franklin

In order to understand the ritual of wine-bibbing and its place within a broader global context, it is necessary to get a sense of the types of wine being imported into the colonies and the way in which the consumers’ choices influenced the political arena at the time of the American Revolution. This chapter will explore the foremost component of the ritual, imported wine itself, and how its consumption set the stage for the social activity of wine bibbing to become a powerful distinguisher of class. First, I will present information from my case study and will then expound upon it with additional background information.

For wine to become a symbolic beverage for social status, the inhabitants of these colonies first needed to demonstrate their desire for upward mobility and cultural enhancement. As survival in the new land became less challenging on a daily basis, and, as trade routes advanced, the wealthier individuals, such as those living in Annapolis, differentiated themselves by their ability to afford luxurious goods. Those who strove to possess the many objects associated with wine consumption initially needed to have a supply of wine worthy of such accoutrements. As early as 1657 in what is presently upstate New York, Jeremias van Rensselaer wrote to his cousin in Holland: “your merchandise which I took with me came over in good order and the glasses may sell well. The market for them has been poor, as there was no wine up

above, so that no people had no need of them, but now that there is wine, I have already sold 7 or 8 beavers worth of them.”<sup>23</sup>

Furthermore, it is important to know what types of wines were imported since the difficulty in obtaining certain varieties had both financial and political implications, which rarely seemed to dissuade the purchaser and, at times, was perhaps an enticing factor in their acquisition. Without any one of these elements imported wine consumption may not have become a representative way of communication and, thus, a significant part in a male’s quest for gentility.

### Section 1: Case Study of Annapolis

Annapolis, Maryland was one of the early economic centers in the colonies and, therefore, a town where goods, such as wine and its accoutrements, became an important part of daily life. The area’s history began in 1694, when the Maryland Assembly voted to move the state’s capital from St. Mary’s in southern Maryland to “Anne-Arundel Towne.” A year later the town’s name was changed to Annapolis.<sup>24</sup> In the early eighteenth century, as Annapolis’s political importance grew, the port became a major distribution center for European goods; ships sailed out of Annapolis

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<sup>23</sup> AJF van Lear, ed., *Correspondence of Jeremias Van Rensselaer* (Albany: University of State of NY, 1982), 47. I am grateful to Arlene Palmer Schwind for sharing this reference. Jeremias van Rensselaer succeeded his brother as the third director of Rensselaerwyck, the largest and most successful patroonship in the Dutch Colony of New Netherland, extending over much of present-day upstate New York and into southern Vermont. He married Maria Van Cortlandt, the sister of the New York mayor, Stephanus Van Cortlandt and the sister-in-law of the Albany mayor, Pieter Schuyler.

<sup>24</sup> Elizabeth A. Anderson, *Annapolis: A Walk through History* (Centreville, MD: Tidewater Publishers, 1984), 15.

with tobacco and returned with the latest fashions.<sup>25</sup> The town residents purchased many of these goods before they were shipped to other colonial outposts. By 1740, a relatively small number of planter-gentry families owned seventy percent of the town land, quickly making Annapolis as socially competitive as any of the larger cities on the East Coast.<sup>26</sup> An English visitor to Annapolis wrote: “the quick importation of fashions from the mother country is really astonishing...a new fashion is adopted earlier by the polished and affluent American than by many opulent persons in the great metropolis [London]...In short, very little difference is, in reality, observable in the manners of the wealthy colonist and the wealthy Briton.”<sup>27</sup>

Annapolis’s true golden age occurred between the early 1760s and the late 1780s; “The bustling sea port grew rapidly, and the town became a center of stylish decorum with amenities like theaters and social clubs. Annapolis became home to a series of formal gardens and ostentatious buildings which included several impressive five-part brick Georgian mansions.”<sup>28</sup> As the population growth in Annapolis rose 27.7% during the second half of the eighteenth century, no less than fourteen impressive townhouses were erected.<sup>29</sup> During the social season, many of the owners of these elegant houses hosted opulent gatherings, one possible reason why the Rector of St.

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<sup>25</sup> Trade in early America was generally based on a mercantile economy where raw materials and agricultural products from the colonies were traded for manufactured goods from other countries, particularly England.

<sup>26</sup> Yentsch and McKee: 48.

<sup>27</sup> William Eddis, *Letters from America*, ed. Aubrey Land (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1769), 57-58. Quoted in T.H. Breen, “Baubles of Britain: The American and Consumer Revolutions in the Eighteenth Century,” in *Of Consuming Interests: The Style of Life in the Eighteenth Century*, ed. Cary Carson, Ronald Hoffman, and Peter J. Albert (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1994), 459.

<sup>28</sup> Paul A. Shackel, Paul R. Mullins, and Mark S. Warner, ed., *Annapolis Past: Historical Archaeology in Annapolis, Maryland* (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1998), xx-xxi.

<sup>29</sup> Papenfuss, *In Pursuit of Profit: The Annapolis Merchants in the Era of the American Revolution, 1763-1805*, 17, 29.

Anne's Parish, Reverend Jonathan Boucher, stated in 1770 that Annapolis was "the genteel town in North America."<sup>30</sup>

Instead of exchanging their crops for credit, as frequently occurred in other towns, many planters in Annapolis used cash to buy goods from local businessmen. This, in turn, helped the merchants successfully import high-end wares over a long period of time. Fourteen of the twenty-two merchants who advertised in the town in 1774 remained in business for at least another decade, quite an impressive feat during the colonial period.<sup>31</sup> Another factor that assisted Annapolis's economic growth was Maryland's non-involvement in the French and Indian War (1754 to 1763), which meant that unlike other colonies, Maryland was not burdened with war debt.<sup>32</sup>

Because of the Revolution, the mouth of the Chesapeake Bay was blockaded by the British Navy from 1777 to 1778, making it impossible for luxury goods to be shipped directly to Annapolis. Instead, items had to be transported from the Atlantic Ocean side of Maryland's eastern shore or from Philadelphia.<sup>33</sup> One consequence of this was that a number of Annapolis residents began moving to Baltimore, thereby transforming this city to the new social center for the state. Yet Annapolis's moment in the sun was not quite over, for this small, genteel town found itself to be the capital of the United States from November 26, 1783 until August 13, 1784, while the Continental Congress reconvened there for a nine-month session. During this time,

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<sup>30</sup> Quoted in Anderson, 18-19.

<sup>31</sup> Papenfuss, *In Pursuit of Profit: The Annapolis Merchants in the Era of the American Revolution, 1763-1805*, 27, 33.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 30.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 93.

George Washington resigned as Commander in Chief of the Continental Army, and the Treaty of Paris, which ended the Revolutionary War, was ratified.<sup>34</sup> Obviously, there was much cause for celebration, warranting large amounts of wine, in the new capital. On December 22, 1783, at a State House dinner with George Washington as host, 98 bottles of wine and 2 ½ gallons of spirits were consumed. A year later at a similar dinner, George Mann, the proprietor of a local tavern, billed Washington for 42 bottles of Madeira, 21 bottles of Port, and 4 gallons of spirits.<sup>35</sup> The number of Annapolis residents again began to grow in the postwar years; however, after 1788 this growth slowed, commerce declined, and Annapolis became the relatively quiet town it remains today.<sup>36</sup>

During the colonial period, Maryland's trading abilities, and, thus, its supply of luxury goods, were greatly affected by the Navigation Acts, which allowed Britain to control the range and prices of foreign goods from non-British countries (the Navigation Acts will be discussed in further detail in Section 3 of this chapter). Until 1764, however, ships from Madeira were permitted to travel directly to their destinations, including the port of Annapolis. On May 15, 1755, the Schooner *Industry* arrived in the port carrying 27 pipes, 8 hogsheads, and 38 ¼ casks of Madeira.<sup>37</sup> Following the Revolution and the Treaty of Paris, the array of foreign goods greatly expanded as free trade now became a part of the colonies' everyday

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<sup>34</sup> Anderson, 19.

<sup>35</sup> Frederick Philip Stieff, *Eat, Drink and Be Merry in Maryland* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1998), Appendix C, D, E; 315-317.

<sup>36</sup> Papenfuse, *In Pursuit of Profit: The Annapolis Merchants in the Era of the American Revolution, 1763-1805*, 153.

<sup>37</sup> Naval Officer, Port of Entry Records, Annapolis, MSA S204-3, Maryland State Archives.

life. French goods (including French wines) became widely available in Annapolis, due in part to the business of Wallace, Johnson, and Muir, who expanded the tobacco trade with France between 1781 and 1783.<sup>38</sup> On January 22, 1783, this firm wrote to its Bordeaux associate, Thomas Ridout, requesting fifty-four cases of Claret, noting that it should be “real good & well flavored & strong Bodied, that will bear the voyage.”<sup>39</sup> In November of the same year, Thomas Ridout wrote to his Annapolis relative, John Ridout: “I hope Mr. Carroll has recd. his wine & expect the Col Lloyds is at sea...”<sup>40</sup> Five years later, on January 31, 1788, the Gazette published a list of seventeen ships arriving in Annapolis from all over the world, including Barbados, Limington, Demarara, Aux-Cays, Amsterdam, Dublin, St. Croix, Salem, Belfast, Port-au-Prince, Charleston, St. Bartholomews, Rhode Island, Norfolk, and three from New York.<sup>41</sup>

For the local upper class, such as Edward Lloyd IV, who owned an elaborate plantation in the country (Wye House in Talbot County) as well as an elegant house in Annapolis (Chase-Lloyd House), the rules of social graces and the intentional communication of one’s place in society were similarly demonstrated in both locations. It did not matter if a man of wealth lived in an urban center or rural

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<sup>38</sup> Papenfuss, *In Pursuit of Profit: The Annapolis Merchants in the Era of the American Revolution, 1763-1805*, 109.

<sup>39</sup> Wallace, Johnson, and Muir Letter Book, 22 January 1783, 1781-1783, New York Public Library. Microfilm # M1191, MD State Archives. Quoted in Bradley C. Brooks, “The Social Functions of Alcohol in Eighteenth-Century Maryland” (Master’s Thesis, University of Delaware, 1988).

<sup>40</sup> Ridout Papers, MSA SC371, Maryland State Archives. I am grateful to Jean Russo at the Historic Annapolis Foundation for sharing this reference. It is unclear which Carroll Ridout is referring to but Col Lloyd would have been Edward Lloyd IV.

<sup>41</sup> Elihu S. Riley, *The Ancient City: A History of Annapolis, in Maryland, 1649-1887* (Annapolis: Record Printing Office, Reprinted by the Anne Arundel-Annapolis Bicentennial Committee, 1887, reprinted 1976), 222.

plantation – imported wine was a desirable and present item in most gentlemen’s households. As was the case in all the colonies, if a man was fortunate enough to have more than one house, wine could have been moved from one location to the other, along with the silver and clothing. In South Carolina, Charles Drayton noted in his diary of 1797: “Sent to Sava. A Celaret. with 2. cases Wine.”<sup>42</sup> Drayton is referring to Savannah Bob, another plantation he owned, indicating that wine was at times shipped between his properties. Charles Carroll of Annapolis and his son Charles Carroll of Carrollton frequently sent wine back and forth among their properties. In April of 1770, Charles Carroll of Annapolis requested four or five dozen bottles of Claret be sent from the Carroll Annapolis house to Doughoregan, their manor house in Howard County. Two years later he again asked that French wine be sent - this time Burgundy and Côte Rôtie.<sup>43</sup> Due to the fragility of the product, however, this may not have been a common practice. Ideally, a gentleman who split his time between properties, probably ordered wine separately for each location; however, there would have been little distinction between the quality and quantity of wine consumed at either site.

In April of 1785, Edward Lloyd IV purchased from the French merchant William Bousie 60 bottles of Champagne, 60 bottles of Burgundy, and an undetermined quantity of Barsac wine and lunch Frontenac. Lloyd was well versed in the quality of

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<sup>42</sup> Charles Drayton Diary, 1785-1820. Owned by Drayton Hall, South Carolina. I am grateful to Tim Chesser at Drayton Hall for sharing this reference.

<sup>43</sup> Ronald Hoffman, ed., *Dear Papa, Dear Charley: The Peregrinations of a Revolutionary Aristocrat, as Told by Charles Carroll of Carrollton and His Father, Charles Carroll of Annapolis*, vol. I-III (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 504, 613. Soon after Charles Carroll of Carrollton’s wedding in 1768, his father, Charles Carroll of Annapolis moved to Doughoregan, leaving the Annapolis house to be occupied by his son. Descriptions of all the varieties of wines mentioned in this paper are listed in the Appendix.



wine he preferred and when ordering six dozen bottles of Claret in 1792, he wrote to the London merchants Oxley Hancock & Co.: “The Claret wine is sound good Wine but I have had better from London formerly, and beg to call your attention to the wine now ordered that it is the best that can pofsibly [sic] be procured...None will Answer but Wine of the first flavor and quality.”<sup>44</sup> Upon Lloyd’s death in 1796, literally thousands of bottles of wine were recorded, covering two pages of his Wye House inventory. In the list were 689 bottles of Madeira; 1,822 bottles of sweet wine; 66 assorted bottles of Sherry, Lisbon, Port, Claret, Champagne, Burgundy and Rhenish wines; 6 pint bottles of Port; 21 gallons of Madeira; 4 cases of Port; 6 gallons of sweet wine; 6 pipes of Madeira; and 15 gallons of old Madeira.<sup>45</sup> All of this totaled over 1,000 pounds sterling. When a decedent owned multiple houses in different counties, separate probate inventories were not usually taken since that would involve multiple jurisdictions. Instead the inventories were either listed separately but recorded under one county or all of the individual’s possessions would be consolidated at one location. Because the appraisers of Lloyd’s estate did not separate his possessions by house but did mention a quantity of silver plate that had been in Annapolis, we can question whether some of this wine was originally stored in the Chase-Lloyd house in town.

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<sup>44</sup> Lloyd Papers, 1658-1910, MS 2001 Box 15, Volume 7 and Reel 21, Maryland Historical Society. Quoted in Alexandra A. Alevizatos, ““Procured of the Best and Most Fashionable Materials:” the Furniture and Furnishings of the Lloyd Family, 1750-1850” (Master's Thesis, University of Delaware, 1999), Appendix C.

<sup>45</sup> Talbot County Inventories, Volume JPF, Microfilm Reel WK 597-598: 38-133. Maryland State Archives.

Another well-known resident of Annapolis, Charles Carroll, Barrister spent a great deal of time writing to agents abroad informing them of wine-related orders and indicating that he had knowledge of the complexity of this beverage. On December 6, 1766, he wrote to the firm Scott Pringle and Company, located on Madeira, "I desire you will by the first vessel coming to Annapolis send me a pipe of the best Madeira wine as it is for my own table use I would have it of the very prime kind...If you can have the wine two or three years old or more if it can be got of equal goodness in quality and tho' it should cost me more I shall willingly allow it." Possibly in response to this order, he again wrote to the firm in 1769 (now called Scott, Pringle, Cheap, & Co.): "I am now about Breaking the pipe of wine I Received from you in 1767 the flavor of which I think Good in Kind. But I fear Tho' I hope I may be mistaken it may be Rather too Hard for me as the very Dry Wine are [sic] in General Too Harsh for my Stomach which the Soft Silky Balsamic wines suit better."<sup>46</sup>

Charles Carroll of Carrollton (cousin of Charles Carroll, Barrister and son of Charles Carroll of Annapolis) was one of the wealthiest men in the colonies and the only Catholic signer of the Declaration of Independence. Growing up in a well-educated, affluent family Carroll learned about wines as a young man while studying in Europe. In October of 1763, at twenty-six years of age, he wrote from Paris to his father in Annapolis: "The enclosed paper contains the different prices of Mon Nisett's wines. I can answer for the Chambertin's [wine produced in the Côte de Beaune section of

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<sup>46</sup> "Letters of Charles Carroll, Barrister," *Maryland Historical Magazine* 38 (1943): 365-66. This particular Charles Carroll referred to himself as CC "Barrister" to distinguish himself from the other Charles Carrolls in his family. Although he built a home outside of Baltimore (Mount Clare) after his marriage to Margaret Tilghman in 1763, he maintained a residence in Annapolis where the above mentioned letters were written.

Burgundy] being excellent: I was nearly tempted to give Mr. Nisett a commission to send you a pipe: let me advise you, if you buy French wines always buy the best.”<sup>47</sup>

Back in Annapolis, Carroll wrote a lengthy letter in 1774 to the firm Lawton and Browne in Cork, Ireland regarding the care and handling of the vast amount of Claret he consumed per year:

The Claret you shipped last was very good, and approved by all who drank it, I mean the Hogshead which was first used, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Hogshead fell short of the first in point of Flavour, indeed it proved but a very indifferent wine, owing I believe to my keeping it a Twelve-month without bottling. I consume nearly two hogsheads pr. Annum and therefore I beg you will send me very early next spring two Hogsheads of the very best and newest Claret you can procure from Bourdeaux...In 10 or 12 days from the Arrival of this Claret in my cellars I propose to bottle it off, for in that time I imagine it will be fine enough to bottle, I am satisfied by dear bought experience that Claret will not retain its flavour if Kept in the Cask even 6 month after its arrival in this Province, and the older the Claret the greater the hazard, which induces me to write for the very newest.<sup>48</sup>

In addition to French wines, Carroll also ordered a large quantity of Madeira. On April 15, 1795, he wrote to the well-known Philadelphia merchant Henry Hill requesting an order be placed with his partners Lamar Hill Bisset & Co. on Madeira for “three butts of their best, three years old Madeira wine.” This particular wine shipment cost just over 151 pounds. Every few years Carroll ordered the same amount (three butts containing from 145 to 160 gallons each) and specified exactly how he wanted the wine shipped. The butts were to be made of the “best Hamburg staves, well secured with iron hoops and banded with the letters and mark in the

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<sup>47</sup> Hoffman, ed., *Dear Papa, Dear Charley: The Peregrinations of a Revolutionary Aristocrat, as Told by Charles Carroll of Carrollton and His Father, Charles Carroll of Annapolis*, 335.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, 723. A hogshead contained approximately 145 gallons of wine.

margin of this letter.”<sup>49</sup> As Carroll mentioned in his letter to Lawton and Browne, he kept the wine in his “cellars,” which appeared to be an underground vaulted area in the eastern section of the house that was accessed via a service stairway near the dining room.<sup>50</sup> An eighteen-century bottle seal with Carroll’s family crest was discovered at the site and is now housed in the collection at the Historic Annapolis Foundation.

Other wealthy Annapolis residents may not have gone to such great lengths to describe their wine consumption, but they too continuously stored a variety of foreign wine in their homes. Canary, a variety of wine seldom mentioned in Annapolis probate records, was listed in Joseph Galloway’s inventory of 1753, along with Madeira and red and white wine.<sup>51</sup> One year later, Daniel Dulany the Elder’s probate record of 1754 included a much broader array of wines stored in his “vault” and “cellars.” At his death he had 153 bottles of Claret, 23 of Memsey Madeira, 30 of Rhenish, 24 of Port, 125 of Fontemack, 20 gallons of Madeira, and an additional pipe of Madeira containing 104 gallons. All of this wine had a value of 103.90 pounds in a large estate worth 3,062.2.10 ¼ pounds.<sup>52</sup> Dulany was a lawyer who held both public and private offices. He also had three financially beneficial marriages, collectively enabling him to die a wealthy man. Associated both personally and professionally

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<sup>49</sup> Charles Carroll of Carrollton Letterbook. Arents Tobacco Collection, New York Public Library. I am grateful to Catherine Arthur at Homewood House for sharing a transcript of this letter book.

<sup>50</sup> Edward Chappell et al., *Architecture in Annapolis: A Field Guide*, ed. Marcia M. Miller and Orlando V Ridout (Newark, DE: The Vernacular Architecture Forum; Crownsville, MD: Maryland Historical Trust Press: 1998), 53. There is also a very large underground vault detached from the house; however, there is currently debate over the origin of this wine cellar. The Redemptorists may have built it during their 100 year occupancy of the house (1852-1969).

<sup>51</sup> Prerogative Court Inventories, Volume 57: 133-137. Maryland State Archives.

<sup>52</sup> Prerogative Court Inventories, Volume 84: 47-67. Maryland State Archives.

with other wealthy, wine-loving Annapolitans, Dulany must have frequently hosted wine-bibbing evenings with his contemporaries. Interestingly, when Dulany's wife, Henrietta Maria, died twelve years later, no wine and only a small quantity of rum is listed in the house, indicating that she did not partake in wine consumption as her husband did.<sup>53</sup>

In the second half of the eighteenth century, the wealthy gentlemen of Annapolis continued to show a proclivity for foreign wines. An inventory was taken of John Brice's house in 1767, which lists 199 quarts of Port<sup>54</sup> and 338 quarts of Madeira. Brice was a justice of the Provincial Court from 1741 to 1766 and, although he lived in an early, somewhat modest house in the center of Annapolis, the value of his estate was still sizable at 3,169.7.5 pounds.<sup>55</sup> Still, Brice's amount of wine did not begin to compare to that of John Morton Jordan whose foreign wines represented one of the most valuable components of his property (as valuable as his bay horses and more so than his individual enslaved workers). In addition to 8 pipes and 4 dozen bottles of Madeira, he also had large quantities of Claret (16 bottles), Port (53 bottles), Malmsey Madeira (1 ¼ cask – 2/3 full), and Lisbon wine (38 bottles) listed in his probate inventory of 1771. His whole estate was worth 1,820.15.8 pounds with his wine adding up to over 153 pounds of that.<sup>56</sup> Jordan owned very few pieces of wine

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<sup>53</sup> Prerogative Court Inventories, Volume 96: 138-151. Maryland State Archives.

<sup>54</sup> Appraisers inconsistently specify which color port they are referring to in inventories. We know that both red and white port was being delivered to the Annapolis Harbor, for the merchant, William Aikman, listed a supply of both in the *Maryland Gazette* on November 17, 1774 (MSA SC2731, Maryland State Archives).

<sup>55</sup> Prerogative Court Inventories, Volume 97: 180-185. Maryland State Archives. Brice was in the process of building a larger house at the time of his death.

<sup>56</sup> Prerogative Court Inventories, Volume 114:139-152. Maryland State Archives.

equipage and since he was a successful merchant, we cannot disregard the fact that he may have been storing this wine for his various customers.

Philip Thomas Lee is an example of a man who regarded wine as a useful and valuable commodity which needed to be protected during tumultuous times. He was a lawyer who served in many legislative roles including Maryland's Upper Legislative House from 1773 to 1774 and lived with his family in Annapolis until the Revolutionary War. For safety, he then moved his wife and children to his father's plantation, Blenheim, in Charles County where he died in 1778. Lee's inventory of 1780 lists the majority of his personal possessions as still being located in Annapolis (including all of his books and a large variety of wine accoutrements, which will be discussed in Chapter 3 of this paper); nevertheless, his supply of wine was recorded in storage at the Charles County house. It can be assumed that he transported his collection of wine to the country where it would carry him through the war years, especially since procuring any additional wine may have been difficult during this time. Listed in the inventory are 3 double bottles of Burgundy, 4 bottles of Hock, 3 bottles of red wine, 6 bottles of sweet wine and 174 bottles of Madeira.<sup>57</sup>

Another of Maryland's four signers of the Declaration of Independence was Thomas Stone. He was a lawyer who served in many public offices, including the State Senate. While in Annapolis, he lived in the Peggy Stewart House but also frequented his country home, Habre de Venture in Charles County. Friendly with the likes of

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<sup>57</sup> Charles County Inventories, Maryland Register of Wills 1788-1791, MSA CM386-10: 246-260. Maryland State Archives.

Edward Lloyd and the various Carrolls, Stone was well versed in the ritual of wine consumption. Listed in Stone's 1787 Annapolis inventory is 1 pipe of Madeira (containing up to 290 gallons of wine), 30 bottles of Hock, 6 bottles of Claret, and 4 bottles of an unnamed wine. The Madeira is the most expensive item in his entire inventory.<sup>58</sup>

Finally, it is interesting to note an inventory which surprisingly does not list any wine. Governor Robert Eden who fled back to England in 1776 had an amazing array of wine equipage (see Chapter 3 of this paper). However, according to the inventory taken of the Governor's mansion after he left, Eden appeared not to have any wine in storage. It is quite probable that the men in charge of the estate arranged to disperse the wine amongst themselves rather than record it.

All of the inventories listed above describe estates belonging to the elite whose overall worth was at least 1,800 pounds. There appears to be a large disparity between the amount of imported wine stored in these homes and that stored in aspiring households, where perhaps only a few bottles or gallons of brandy, rum, Porter, or Madeira were listed in the probate records. This indicates that the varieties of wine consumed and the types of individuals who were able to afford them were a significant factor in this consumption ritual.

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<sup>58</sup> Charles County Inventories, Maryland Register of Wills 1785-1788, MSA CM386-9: 489-494. Maryland State Archives.

## Section 2: Types of Wines

The gentlemen of Annapolis depended upon imported wine since efforts to establish viticulture in the colonies were not successful. Upon arriving in Virginia, early wine-drinking colonists were encouraged by the sight of wild vines covered with grapes, and they were equally optimistic about the prospects of growing European vines. Their expectations, however, of being able to produce large quantities of quality wine were soon shattered by the abundance of endemic plant diseases, the high cost of producing wines, and the lack of flavor in locally grown grapes. Consequently, approximately twenty gallons was the grand total produced during the early years of the Jamestown settlement.<sup>59</sup> Other areas of the colonies, such as New England in the 1640s, Maryland in the 1670s, South Carolina and Pennsylvania in the 1680s, and Georgia in the 1740s and 1750s, also experimented with foreign vines but they too did not succeed.<sup>60</sup> The earliest known American texts on viticulture include Edward Antill's *An Essay on the Cultivation of the Vine*, published in the first volume of the *American Philosophical Transactions* (1771) and an unpublished 1775 text by Robert Bolling of Virginia entitled *A Sketch of Vine Culture*. Sir Edward Barry's *Observations Historical, Critical and Medicinal, on Wines of the Ancients* (1775) describes the viticulture efforts of Louis de Saint Pierre, "who has established a great colony of vigneron [winegrowers] in South Carolina, and carried there three years ago above three hundred vigneron from different parts of Europe...he has not the least doubt of having excellent Wine there, which if he has, must be of infinite service

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<sup>59</sup> Richard J. Hooker, *Food and Drink in America* (New York: Carroll & Graf Publishers, Inc., 1999), 36-37.

<sup>60</sup> Barr, *Drink: A Social History of America*, 355.



to this country.”<sup>61</sup> Josiah Quincy, Jr. on his visit to the Charleston area in 1773 also noted the brief success of the growth of foreign grapes at Joseph Allston’s plantation, the Oaks: “He [Allston] has propagated the Lisbon and Wine-Island grapes with great success.”<sup>62</sup> Even during the late eighteenth century, there were still high hopes over the indigenous vines as noted in Samuel Deane’s first publication of *The New England Farmer* in 1790. In describing the native vines of New England, Deane states “Who can doubt whether the appearance of these indigenous vines indicate, that nature has designed such a country for vineyards?”<sup>63</sup> Unfortunately, this proved not to be the case until the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and, although small quantities of local, homemade wines were accessible to all wealth groups, the “superior” wines of the eighteenth century had to be imported, which, inevitably, limited their availability to only those able to afford such a luxury. The demand for European wines was so great, that early immigrants to Maryland were encouraged to bring it with them in order to trade it for cattle upon arrival.<sup>64</sup>

As can be seen in the Annapolis inventories, colonists mimicked the English in their preferences of foreign wine varieties. They enjoyed the heavier, sweeter wines such as Canary, Port, Lisbon, Sherry (or “Sack”), Malaga (or Mountain), and Fayal from

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<sup>61</sup> Quoted in Janice B. Longone and Daniel T. Longone, *American Cookbooks and Wine Books, 1797-1950* (Ann Arbor: The Clements Library and The Wine and Food Library, 1984), 42.

<sup>62</sup> “Journal of Josiah Quincy, Junior, 1773,” *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society* 49 (1916): 453.

<sup>63</sup> Quoted in Longone and Longone, 42.

<sup>64</sup> Hooker, *Food and Drink in America*, 36-37. By the second quarter of the nineteenth century, viticulture enthusiasts on the east coast and in the mid-west were beginning to relinquish hope for growing European grapes and were turning their interest towards native varieties with some success. By the middle of the century, Ohio and Missouri were producing the most wine, only to be surpassed by California in the 1870’s. Furthermore, the climate in California proved to be extremely hospitable for the European vine. For references on American viticulture, see: Thomas Pinney, *A History of Wine in America: From Prohibition to the Present* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989) and Longone and Longone, *American Cookbooks and Wine Books* (1984).

Spain and Portugal and their respective territories. Madeira, from the Portuguese island of the same name (400 miles off the coast of West Africa), was by far the most popular. In 1703 only four varieties of grapes were grown on Madeira: white, black, Malvasia, and Vidonia; yet, by 1807, twenty-three types existed.<sup>65</sup>

The demand for Madeira was so high that there are accounts of merchants sending enslaved workers to the island in exchange for wine. Thomas McMullen wrote in his 1852 *Hand-book of Wines*: “The first colonies of North America were no sooner settled there, than they carried slaves, corn, and other produce to the island, and exchanged them for wine.”<sup>66</sup> A visitor to New York in the late 1700’s wrote: “I have gone dining about from house to house but meet with the same round of topics everywhere – land, Madeira wine, fishing parties, or politics, make up the sum total.”<sup>67</sup> Peter Manigault of Charleston wrote in a letter to his wine merchants, Lamar, Hill, and Bisset on July 31, 1767, “As I would spare no price to have the best Wine the Island can afford, I must again desire the Favor of you to order me two of the Best pipes that can be got for Money.”<sup>68</sup> After drawing up a prenuptial agreement for Charles Carroll, Jr.’s marriage to Harriet Chew, the lawyer, Mr. Cook, requested that his services be paid for in the form of Madeira. The groom’s father, Charles Carroll of Carrollton, wrote to his son on July 3, 1800: “Mr. Cook asks a quarter Cask of

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<sup>65</sup> David Hancock, "Commerce and Conversation in the Eighteenth-Century Atlantic: The Invention of Madeira Wine," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* XXIX, no. 2 (1998): 204.

<sup>66</sup> Thomas McMullen, *Hand-Book of Wines: Practical, Theoretical, and with a Description of Foreign Spirits and Liqueurs* (New York: D. Appleton, 1852), 91.

<sup>67</sup> Quoted in Emanuel Berk, *A Century Past: A Celebration of the Madeira Party in America* (Sonoma, CA: The Rare Wine Company, 1999), 5.

<sup>68</sup> Quoted in Maurice A. Crouse, ed, "The Letterbook of Peter Manigault, 1763-1773," *The South Carolina Historical Magazine* 70, no. 2 (1969): 93. See mention of Peter Manigault in the discussion of George Roupel’s drawing in Chapter 2 of this paper.

Madeira for drawing up the marriage settlement. I have written to him that I shall present you this Summer or Autumn with a But [sic] of Madeira, out of which you will let him have thirty gallons.”<sup>69</sup>

Madeira was popular for numerous reasons. First, because of its high level of acidity, it was considered a refreshing beverage in the early eighteenth century and was described as “fittest to cheer the fainting spirits in the heat of summer, and to warm the chilled blood in the bitter colds of winter.”<sup>70</sup> Subsequently, in the second quarter of the eighteenth century, many Madeiras began to be fortified with brandy, increasing their alcohol content to a hearty 15 to 18 percent. The belief was that fortification helped the sweet and somewhat rough wine to become smoother and more pleasant tasting. This occurred partly because the brandy stopped the fermentation process, which, in turn, enabled the wine to not only withstand but also to favor the hard sea voyage and the fluctuations of temperatures better than other wines. Since both heat and oxidation, enemies of most wines, proved vital to the development of the Madeira, long ocean voyages, with warm temperatures and the constant rocking of the sea, enhanced its aging process. The most sought after Madeiras became ones delivered to their port of destination via a non-direct route, giving them more time to age. A trip to the East or West Indies and then back to London or the American colonies could take upwards of six months. In his article,

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<sup>69</sup> Current location of the original letter is unknown. Transcript copy in Homewood House Archives. I am grateful to Catherine Arthur at Homewood House for sharing this information. Although the marriage of Carroll and Chew was an auspicious one since each was from one of the wealthier families in America, it was not a happy marriage. Carroll’s severe alcoholism finally forced Harriet to flee Baltimore with her children and take refuge with her family back in Philadelphia. See further discussions on Charles Carroll, Jr. in Chapter 5 of this paper.

<sup>70</sup> Quoted in Barr, *Drink: A Social History of America*, 42.

“Commerce and Conversation in the Eighteenth-Century Atlantic: The Invention of Madeira Wine,” David Hancock mentions that the first record of a distributor or consumer intentionally sending wine on a longer than necessary route was in 1749 via the West Indies and again in 1772 via India. By the end of the eighteenth century, vintners began to heat the wine in specially built rooms called hot-houses before it even left the island. Also around this time, according to various letters written between merchants, Americans started to prefer artificially rocked Madeira, rather than wine rocked naturally by the ocean. Agitation seemed to distribute the brandy more evenly throughout the wine, leading distributors to ensure complete blending of all ingredients by utilizing steam-powered machines that rocked the wine. Since different parts of the colonies favored varying amounts of fortification, some distributors even supplied unfortified wines along with a cask of brandy, to be mixed in at the seller’s discretion. Southerners preferred dry white wine that had been heavily fortified, while Philadelphians desired the golden wines with less brandy. New Yorkers asked for even less brandy and more sugar.<sup>71</sup>

French wines were sought after, but, because of the bad relationship between England and France, importation of these wines into the colonies was kept to a minimum until after the Revolutionary War when trade opened up between America and France (see mention of the Annapolis firm Wallace, Johnson, and Muir and their importation of French wines in Section 1 of this chapter). Furthermore, any French wines that were allowed to be imported into the colonies before the Revolution were heavily taxed

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<sup>71</sup> Hancock, "Commerce and Conversation in the Eighteenth-Century Atlantic: The Invention of Madeira Wine," 212, 207-208.

under Britain's Navigation Acts.<sup>72</sup> Claret, which was defined as any red Bordeaux, was the most popular of the French wines, but Burgundies, Champagne, and Frontenacs were also purchased. Wealthy Annapolitans were not the only individuals increasing their consumption of French wine after the Revolution. In 1805, the ship, *Woodrop Sims* arrived in Charleston from Bordeaux carrying: 40 hogsheads of vintage 1802 Claret, Champagne in cases of 12 bottles each, "old" Lafite in cases of 12 pint and half bottles each, as well as in cases of 34 pint and half bottles each, and 292 hogsheads of "Cargo Wine."<sup>73</sup>

Thomas Jefferson, who spent more than 8,000 dollars on wine during his first term as President, was known for his obsession with French wines. He felt that consumption of them would alleviate some of the drunkenness he witnessed among his peers since French wine was not fortified and, thus, contained less alcohol than other wines such as Madeira; "I am anxious to introduce here these fine wines [French wines] in place of the alcoholic wines of Spain and Portugal. The delicacy and innocence of these wines will change the habit from the coarse [sic] and inebriating hitherto only known here." By the mid-nineteenth century Jefferson had gotten his wish, for French wines were considered more popular than Madeira. This, however, was not just due to taste, for in the spring of 1852, the vineyards on Madeira were eradicated by the powerful disease called oïdium fungus, which attacks the leaves and grapes of the vine before

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<sup>72</sup> In 1764 Richard Derby of Boston smuggled in some French wine by shipping it from Guadeloupe to Madeira and disguising it in Madeira-shaped bottles. (David Hancock, "Markets, Merchants, and the Wider World of Boston Wine, 1700-1775," in *Entrepreneurs: The Boston Business Community, 1700-1850*, ed. Conrad Edick Wright and Kathryn P. Viens (Boston: Massachusetts Historical Society, 1997), 94.) Original letter is in the Richard Derby Letterbook, Essex Institute.

<sup>73</sup> *City Gazette*, Charleston, South Carolina, 5 September, 1805. I am grateful to the Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts Reference Library for providing this information.

they have ripened.<sup>74</sup> Lastly, a few German wines, such as Hock and Rhenish, are frequently listed in probate records such as those of Edward Lloyd IV's and Philip Thomas Lee's.

One only has to examine the inventories of the colonies' governors during the years prior to the Revolution to see that the variety of wines imported elsewhere along the east coast were similar to those in Annapolis cellars. In 1770, after his death, an inventory was begun for His Excellency Lord Botetourt's palace in Virginia. Included varieties in a list of over one thousand bottles of wine are Madeira, Burgundy, Claret, red Port, "Champaine," Hock, and general white wine. Much of this was stored in his extensive cellar, in rooms individually labeled as the "binn cellar," the "vault," and the "Madeira and Cheese Store." Areas of the original brick walls and interior storage bins survive at the Governor's Palace, verifying that wine binning was practiced in the colonies as early as 1706 when the palace was constructed.<sup>75</sup>

In the inventory of Governor Tyron's house in New York, taken after it burned in 1773, the wines listed included Port, Madeira, Mountain, Malmsea Madeira, Minorca, Hock, Frontenaic, and Claret. When his Excellency the Honorable Lord William Campbell fled Charleston at the time of the Revolutionary War, he left behind 101 bottles of seven year-old Madeira wine in his "loft" (we can assume that this was a

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<sup>74</sup> Quoted in Barr, *Drink: A Social History of America*, 85. Also, Barr, 82.

<sup>75</sup> William E. Pittman, "Morphological Variability in Late Seventeenth and Early Eighteenth-Century English Wine Bottles" (Master's Thesis, College of William and Mary, 1990), 61-62. In 1769, Lord Botetourt ordered from the London cabinetmaker, William Fenton, a "mohogainy Cellor lined with lead." The order is reproduced in Graham Hood, *The Governor's Palace in Williamsburg: A Cultural Study* (Williamsburg, VA: Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, 1991), 29. The original is in the Badminton Papers, courtesy of the Duke of Beaufort.

type of garret space), as well as 4 pipes of London Madeira, an undetermined amount of Malmsey Madeira, 42 bottles of Frontinac, 69 bottles of Claret, 144 bottles of Rhenish, 5 bottles of Port, and 2 bags of corks in his “wine cellar.”<sup>76</sup> Also in Charleston around this time, Dr. George Milligen stated that “few Gentlemen are without Claret, Port, Lisbon, and other Wines, of the *French, Spanish, or Portugal* Vintages.”<sup>77</sup>

During the first Continental Congress, after dinner with George Washington and a few select Philadelphians at Benjamin Chew Sr.’s town house in Philadelphia, John Adams noted on October 22, 1774: “Wines most excellent and admirable. I drank Madeira at a great rate...”<sup>78</sup> As can be seen in his receipt book, Benjamin Chew Sr. ordered a variety of wine between 1772 and 1787, however, not surprisingly, there appears to be somewhat of a gap around the time of the Revolution:

pipe of Madeira wine 1772  
cask of Mountain wine 1773  
quarter cask of Wine 1774  
pipe of Madeira 1785  
quarter cask of Port wine 1787  
pipe of Madeira 1787<sup>79</sup>

Landon Carter also made note of the difficulty obtaining wine during the War in his diary of 1776: “I have been glad to treat all who came to see me as well as I possibly

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<sup>76</sup> Hood, *The Governor's Palace in Williamsburg: A Cultural Study*. Appendix 1, 6, and 7 respectively.

<sup>77</sup> Quoted in Anna Wells Rutledge, “After the Cloth Was Removed,” *Winterthur Portfolio* 4 (1968): 50.

<sup>78</sup> L.H. Butterfield, ed., *Diary and Autobiography of John Adams*, vol. II (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University, 1961), 136.

<sup>79</sup> Cliveden archival item NTARC.CL.1.23. Nancy E. Richards, “Benjamin Chew's Receipt Book, 1770-1809,” (Cliveden of the National Trust, Inc., 1992). Perceived as a Loyalist because he would not relinquish his crown-appointed position as chief justice of colonial Pennsylvania’s Supreme Court, Chew spent one year of the Revolution under house arrest in New Jersey. I am grateful to Philip Seitz at Cliveden for assistance with information regarding the Chew family.

could; but through the difficulty of the times wine could not be got in the same plenty as usual.”<sup>80</sup>

By 1810, when the Treasury Department started recording quantities of imported wine and the duties paid, the wines listed were divided into eight descriptive categories:

- Malmsey, Madeira and London Particular Madeira
- All other Madeira
- Burgundy, Champagne, Rhenish and Tokay
- Sherry and St. Lucar
- Claret and other wines not enumerated
- Lisbon, Oporto and other Portugal wines
- Teneriffe, Fayal, Malaga, St. George and other western island wines
- All other wines.<sup>81</sup>

Isaac Milnor, the revenue officer at the Port of Philadelphia in 1812, recorded an enormous array of wines arriving on ships. In addition to all the types of wine noted above, there were also quantities of Muscat wine and Catalonia.<sup>82</sup>

### Section 3: Taxation without Representation

In Annapolis and elsewhere in the colonies, it was not just social competition that determined what wines were consumed. In considering Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi’s theory that artifacts objectify the self, these commodities must be viewed as having many roles, beyond their utilitarian one, within a society. As part of a complex system in a social and political economy, commodities, such as wine, took on

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<sup>80</sup> Jack P. Greene, ed., *The Diary of Colonel Landon Carter of Sabine Hall, 1752-1778*, vol. II (Charlottesville: The University Press of Virginia, 1965), 1001.

<sup>81</sup> United States. Register of the Treasury. *Letter from the Secretary of the Treasury* (Washington, DC: Printed by Gales & Seaton, 1826). Owned by the American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, MA.

<sup>82</sup> Shipping Records, 1708-1892, Collection 245, Joseph Downs Collection of Manuscripts and Printed Ephemera, Winterthur Library.



political significance, for it was through the collective consumption of wine that colonists were able to become politicized and thus express their political views. Wine, like tea, became a source of tax revenue for the British, and American colonists in both the North and South recognized it as a metaphor for taxation without representation. As I will show, similar riots to the Boston tea party occurred over wine consumption, yet they are rarely mentioned in history books.

British trading laws affected the types and prices of available wine in the colonies. The Navigation Acts stated that all foreign goods had to be transported in ships built in British or British-colonial shipyards and had to have a crew consisting of 75% British citizens or colonists. Furthermore, foreign goods had to pass through British ports where the items were unloaded and assigned duties. With this system, costs of foreign merchandise were noncompetitive with British goods, thus protecting Britain's commercial monopoly. Americans, however, were permitted to directly import wines, fruit, and olive oil from Britain's ally, Portugal, and the Portuguese Islands, including the Canaries and Madeira.<sup>83</sup> Anyone wanting to import the popular wines from these islands could do so without paying a heavy tax, making them very desirable.

Things began to get difficult for the wine-consuming gentlemen with the Revenue Act of 1764, which placed heavy duties on goods such as wine, sugar, indigo, and coffee arriving in America from all non-British colonies. The British government

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<sup>83</sup> Samuel B. Griffith II, *The War for American Independence* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2002), 13-14.

needed the funds raised from this act to recoup some of its financial losses from the French and Indian War. Realizing that, if the colonists could only be convinced to favor Port, supplied via England, rather than wines delivered directly from their port of origin, British government officials believed the business of trading wine with the colonists could become quite lucrative. In an effort to accomplish this, a small duty of ten shillings per double hogshead was charged for Port and a whopping seven pounds for the same in Madeira.<sup>84</sup> Yet, in the end, the British only succeeded in encouraging the politically aware wine-drinking upper class to bond not only with the tea-drinkers but also with the rum-drinking lower class (whose drinking habits had previously been affected by the Molasses Act of 1733) to form a strong cohort of leaders and militiamen for the Revolution.

In May of 1768, five years before the infamous Boston Tea Party, John Hancock's ship, the *Liberty*, docked in Boston and most of its shipment of Madeira was quietly unloaded while the customs regulator was locked in one of the ship's cabins. When the customs officers arrived the next morning and found little to tax aboard the ship, they arrested Hancock and charged him with smuggling. In response, a crowd of two to three thousand attacked the customs officers who were forced to flee to a nearby island. Shortly afterwards, twelve British warships arrived in Boston in an effort to intimidate the unruly citizens.<sup>85</sup>

Annapolitans reacted to the various duties in much the same way as the New

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<sup>84</sup> Waverly Root and Richard de Rochemont, *Eating in America: A History* (New York: The Ecco Press, 1976), 89-90.

<sup>85</sup> Barr, *Drink: A Social History of America*, 311.

Englanders. In 1773, the ship, *Peggy Stewart*, was sent to Madeira where its cargo of corn, wheat, flour, and beans was sold, the proceeds of which were sent back to Annapolis in the form of wine. The owners of the boat wrote to the captain with advice on how to avoid the importation taxes: "From Madeira you are to return directly to this port and when you come on shore bring all your letters and papers of every kind to us and before you see us do not mention what quantity of wine you have on board or to whom any of it belongs."<sup>86</sup> It is not clear whether it was the same captain of the *Peggy Stewart*, who, one year later, was forced by his fellow colonists to burn the ship in Annapolis with a full cargo of tea still aboard. Because the delegates of Annapolis voted on non-importation laws in a motion to support Boston after the British closed its port following the Boston Tea Party, the ship's owners and captain had made a grievous mistake of attempting to import tea and pay the duties to the British. A year later, in 1775, an Annapolis merchant wrote to a Londoner, "You may depend that we will die before we give up our liberties and have our property at the disposal of a damn lot of rascally ministers."<sup>87</sup> Political talk in general must have occurred frequently among the men who participated in wine-drinking rituals at their peers' homes. Their infatuation with wine only further fueled their misgivings and lack of acceptance of British rule.

If wine had not existed as a luxurious product, the wine-bibbing ritual would never have grown to represent a higher rung on the social ladder for the gentlemen of the

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<sup>86</sup> Quoted in Papenfuss, *In Pursuit of Profit: The Annapolis Merchants in the Era of the American Revolution, 1763-1805*, 46-47.

<sup>87</sup> Quoted in Robert J. Brugger, *Maryland: A Middle Temperament 1634-1980* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press in association with the Maryland Historical Society, 1988), 116.

eighteenth century. Partly because of the difficulty and high cost of importing them, foreign wines were elevated from mere beverage to a necessary ingredient in the life of an elite gentleman. Cary Carson discusses in his article, "The Consumer Revolution in Colonial America: Why Demand?," that demand for frivolous objects leads to supply.<sup>88</sup> The demand for imported wines led not only to a supply of the beverage itself but also to a supply of objects necessary for its care, handling, and presentation. Once these demands were met, another avenue for social and political interaction was established.

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<sup>88</sup> Carson, "The Consumer Revolution in Colonial America: Why Demand?" 483-700. In this article Carson discusses how demand for luxury goods has been prevalent since the 1650s with the courts of Louis XIII and Louis IV. Grant McCracken also explores the history of consumer culture in his book *Culture and Consumption: New Approaches to the Symbolic Character of Consumer Goods and Activities* (1988), including the consumer trends in England that corresponded with those in France.

## Chapter 2: Wine Bibbing as a Ritual: Gender and Gentility

“The bottle is of the aristocracy, treat it like a gentleman.”<sup>89</sup>

Unlike today when we mainly drink wine before and during dinner, individuals of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries consumed the majority of it after the meal. Frenchman, Méderic Louis Élie Moreau de Saint-Méry traveled in Norfolk, VA, New York, and Philadelphia from 1794-1798, and, although the following diary notation was made during his stay in Philadelphia in 1798, it easily applied to dinners held all along the East Coast at that time, including Annapolis: “The entrée is accompanied by Bordeaux or Madeira, which they keep drinking right through dessert, toward the end of which any ladies who are at the dinner leave the table and withdraw by themselves, leaving the men free to drink as much as they please, because then bottles go the round continuously, each man pouring for himself.” Moreau de Saint-Mery also noted that, when the males were left to their own devices, it was not always a mannerly event: “toasts are drunk, cigars are lighted, diners run to the corners of the room hunting night tables and vases which will enable them to hold a greater amount of liquor. Sometimes dinner is prolonged in this manner far into the night, but finally the dinner table is deserted because of boredom, fatigue or drunkenness.”<sup>90</sup> Considering that the dinner hour in the eighteenth century was usually around 2 o’clock in the

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<sup>89</sup> McMullen, *Hand-Book of Wines: Practical, Theoretical, and with a Description of Foreign Spirits and Liqueurs*, 235.

<sup>90</sup> Mederic Louis Elie Moreau de St. Mery, *Moreau De St. Mery's American Journey*, trans. Kenneth Roberts and Anna M. Roberts (Garden City: Doubleday & Company Inc., 1947), 265-66.

afternoon, a late evening of drinking suggests that quite a quantity of wine was consumed.

This chapter will explore the social setting of the wine-drinking ritual described above, and, in particular, the participants in the ritual. What were the underlying forces behind this male activity, and how did it demonstrate that an individual was worthy of social acceptance? Why did the ritual seem to have two levels of participation: one refined and one raucous? Were both considered part of the overall genteel image? Written and visual accounts that collectively reveal the nature of imported wine consumption can assist us in deciphering this complex type of behavior.

Because the colonists had to recreate themselves in a new land, where one's family origins were not always known, there was an identity crisis among this group of opportunists. Colonists had to look to the idealized image of English society for a sense of self, especially among the elite who sought to cast themselves at a level equal to the English gentry.<sup>91</sup> According to David Hancock, by the mid-eighteenth century, even in England, gentility was defined more by deportment than heredity or profession.<sup>92</sup> The same could be said for the colonies, where there was little to inherit. Knowledge of wine and its proper care and handling was a strategic way for the English or American gentleman to demonstrate his worthy place in a higher level of

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<sup>91</sup> Jack P. Greene, *Imperatives, Behaviors, and Identities: Essays in Early American Cultural History* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1992), 159-160, 166.

<sup>92</sup> David Hancock, *Citizens of the World: London Merchants and the Integration of the British Community, 1735-1785* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 280.

society. He successfully distanced himself from those below him by creating an atmosphere that could not be replicated by the lower classes for both lack of funds and for lack of the social and cultural knowledge necessary for achieving the desired effect.<sup>93</sup> Although the expense of wine and related accoutrements was an important factor, skilled elegance was an equally successful way to create a barrier between the classes. Rhys Isaac argues that “Society is not primarily a material entity. It is rather to be understood as a dynamic product of the activities of its members – a product profoundly shaped by the images the participants have of their own and others’ performances.”<sup>94</sup> The characteristics of a true gentleman were almost certainly recognizable among the population in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, even though they may be somewhat unclear to us today.

In his article, “American High-Style and Vernacular Cultures,” Richard Bushman discusses three features of gentility in the eighteenth century, all of which revolve around the idea of performance: a concern for personal refinement, contact between refined people where manners could be exhibited, and arrangement of the proper environment for these gatherings.<sup>95</sup> A distinct gap was formed between men who had the luxury of being able to dedicate themselves to such pursuits and men whose lives did not permit such opulence. “How these men drank reveals much about their self-perceptions and social relations with one another. Drinking was crucial to the process

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<sup>93</sup> There is no written evidence that the lower classes were participating in wine-drinking on a ritualistic level. There are references of individuals consuming too much alcohol (wine included) at taverns which spurred sermons and local laws condemning intoxication.

<sup>94</sup> Rhys Isaac, *The Transformation of Virginia, 1740-1790* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1982), 324.

<sup>95</sup> Richard L Bushman, "American High-Style and Vernacular Cultures," in *Colonial British America: Essays in the New History of the Early Modern Era*, ed. Jack P. Greene and J.R. Pole (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984), 358.

by which a gentleman adopted the forms of “gentility” and demonstrated his gentility to his peers and society at large.”<sup>96</sup>

There was a certain expectation that each gentleman would know the rules of etiquette involved in the care and consumption of wine after dinner. This type of etiquette was more specialized than just the idea of using polite manners when interacting with others. Paul Shackel, in his book, *Personal Discipline and Material Culture*, emphasizes the importance of etiquette, for he believes “it is not an empty formality. It is tied to human relations and the creation of hierarchies in societies, it is dynamic, it supports interest groups, and it has material consequences.”<sup>97</sup> Each individual had to hold his own and participate in the evening’s activities in order to be evaluated and accepted by the group. Captain Thomas Hamilton, an Englishman, recorded details of such a protocol in New York in 1833:

The ladies have no sooner risen from the table, than the business of winebibbing commences in good earnest. The servants still remain in the apartment, and supply fresh glasses to the guests as the successive bottles make their appearance. To each of these a history is attached, and the vintage, the date of importation etc., are all duly detailed; then come the criticisms of the company, and as each bottle produced contains wine of a different quality from its predecessor, there is no chance of the topic being exhausted. At length, having made the complete tour of the cellar, proceeding progressively from commoner wines to those of finest flavor, the party adjourns to the drawing room.<sup>98</sup>

Although his trip occurred a bit later than the time-period examined in this paper, this type of event grew out of the ritualistic wine consumption performed by these

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<sup>96</sup> Peter Thompson, ““the Friendly Glass”: Drink and Gentility in Philadelphia,” *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* CXIII, no. 4 (1989): 549-550.

<sup>97</sup> Paul A. Shackel, *Personal Discipline and Material Culture* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1993), 3-4.

<sup>98</sup> Quoted in Feay Shellman Coleman, *Nostrums for Fashionable Entertainments: Dining in Georgia, 1800-1850* (Savannah: Telfair Academy of Arts and Sciences, Inc., 1992), 25.



gentlemen's fathers in the mid-eighteenth century. As you can see, there was a social obligation that, as a guest at one of these parties, you "were expected to be intellectually prepared to match sensory experience with memories of drinking similar wines in the past and with information gained through reading and conversation."<sup>99</sup> Hamilton also noted on his trip to America: "I have never drunk any Madeira in Europe at all equaling what I have frequently met in the United States. The gentlemen in America pique themselves on their discrimination in wine, in a degree which is not common in England."<sup>100</sup> An example of an Annapolitan agreeing with this sentiment was Charles Carroll of Carrollton who, while staying in England, wrote to his father Charles Carroll of Annapolis on February 30, 1760: "I shall be much obliged to you if you could contrive to send me some good Madeira wine, what we have here is so detestable that I can't drink it."<sup>101</sup>

Several additional letters demonstrate this knowledge of the various characteristics of imported wine; many of the elite gentlemen knew (and were expected to know) what qualities they were looking for in the expensive beverage they were importing. On May 7, 1763, Severn Eyre of Northampton County, Virginia wrote a letter to Newton and Gordon and Company on the island of Madeira regarding the purchase of one Pipe of the best London wine: "Pray let the wine be of the very best kind, and I would wish [?] it to be of a rich amber color."<sup>102</sup> Charles Drayton of South Carolina made

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<sup>99</sup> Robert C. Fuller, *Religion and Wine: A Cultural History of Wine Drinking in the United States* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1996), 16.

<sup>100</sup> Thomas Hamilton, *Men and Manners in America* (London: T. Cadell, 1833), 118-121. Quoted in Barr, *Drink: A Social History of America*, 43-44.

<sup>101</sup> Hoffman, ed., *Dear Papa, Dear Charley: The Peregrinations of a Revolutionary Aristocrat, as Told by Charles Carroll of Carrollton and His Father, Charles Carroll of Annapolis*, 150.

<sup>102</sup> Severn Eyre 1763 Letter, Call #38611, The Library of Virginia, Richmond.

note of his knowledge of wine in a journal entry of 1797: “Will brought the 10 yrs. old wine Vintage 1787 purchased from the agent of the late French and British consuls. Nr. 2 is richer – Nr. 3 more fit for use.”<sup>103</sup> And, in 1789, Thomas Jefferson wrote to James Brown, a Richmond merchant: “I would prefer good Lisbon; next to that Sherry, next to that Carcavelos; but still a good quality of the latter would be preferable to an indifferent quality of the former. If none of these, then claret.”<sup>104</sup>

Whether it was the desire for male bonding or rather the lack of control that sometimes accompanied these men while consuming this valued beverage, the women were expected to leave the table before the wine consumption started in earnest. In his etiquette manual, *The Honours of the Table*, John Trusler wrote in 1788: “Habit having made a pint of wine after dinner almost necessary to a man who eats freely, which is not the case with women, and as their fitting and drinking with the men would be unseemly; it is customary, after the cloth and dessert are removed and 2 or 3 glasses of wine are gone round, for the ladies to retire and leave the men to themselves.”<sup>105</sup> Nevertheless, not every male agreed with this arrangement. Thomas Pinckney, traveling in Virginia, wrote to Harriet Pinckney, in Charleston, on January 31, 1777:

I will take this opportunity once for all of venting my indignation upon an abominable Custom which prevails every where that I have been to the Northward of Charles Town (I will not answer for Maryland as I never dined in private in that State except once). I mean that of the whole Company rising

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<sup>103</sup> Charles Drayton Diary, 1785-1820. Owned by Drayton Hall, South Carolina. I am grateful to Tim Chesser at Drayton Hall for sharing this reference.

<sup>104</sup> Quoted in James M. Gabler, *Passions: The Wines and Travels of Thomas Jefferson* (Baltimore: Bacchus Press, 1995), 169.

<sup>105</sup> John Trusler, *The Honours of the Table, or, Rules of Behavior During Meals* (London: Printed for the author at the Literary Press, 1788).

from the Table immediately upon the Cloths being withdrawn after Meals, and the Ladies retiring to their Apartments; a Custom which spoils good Company, prevents that intercourse of the Sexes which serves to polish and improve both, and in short reduces a Man to the disagreeable necessity of losing his Dinner or the agreeable Conversation of the Ladies.”<sup>106</sup>

Not only did the women “withdraw” after dinner, but, upon occasion, the entire evening was considered strictly a male gathering, where women were not included from the onset. As early as 1730, when he had dinner on multiple occasions with the wealthier families of Portsmouth, New Hampshire, including the Wentworths, Robert Hale made note that “The Gentlemen treat at their own houses and seldom go to the Taverns. Their treats are splendid, they drink excessively all sorts of wine and punch – their women came not into company.”<sup>107</sup> Fifty years later, in Philadelphia, William Hamilton, known for his bachelor dinners where the guests could taste some of his prize Madeira, delivered the following invitation: “Mr. W. Hamilton requests the honor of Dr. Parke’s company to partake of a bachelor’s dinner on Tuesday” (May 13, 1783).<sup>108</sup>

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<sup>106</sup> "Letter, Thomas Pinckney to Harriet Pinckney, Virginia, 31 Jan. 1777," *South Carolina Historical Magazine* 58. I am grateful to the Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts providing this reference.

<sup>107</sup> Quoted in David E. van Deventer, *The Emergence of Provincial New Hampshire, 1623-1741* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976), 218.

<sup>108</sup> Invitation to William Hamilton's, 1783. Pemberton Collection, Vol. 39, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia. In 1784, Mr. Hamilton traveled to England for two years where the Madeira did not meet his approval. On December 1, 1784, he wrote to the same Doctor Thomas Parke in Pennsylvania: “I have therefore to beg that you will contrive to send me some Madeira” (Society Collection, Historical Society of Pennsylvania). I am grateful to Jamie Jacobs at the National Park Service (Historic American Buildings Survey) for sharing these references. See a description of The Woodlands in Chapter 4. To my knowledge, there is no known record of an all-female dinner occurring during this time-period.

An all-male event similar to William Hamilton's dinner was significant enough among the genteel population to be recorded by artists who offered a visual commentary of society, much like authors and their written accounts of various lifestyles. In 1821, Henry Sargent painted *The Dinner Party*, which portrayed just such a male social occasion in Boston, most likely occurring at the artist's own house.<sup>109</sup> The artwork depicts activity after the main courses of dinner are completed, after the tablecloths are removed, and after an unusual amount of wine is placed on the table. The event appears to be a very refined occasion with many pieces of wine equipage visible within the image, including a wine cooler on the floor, wine glasses, bottles, decanters, and coasters.<sup>110</sup> Two elaborately dressed servants represent an additional feature to the evening's accoutrements. The gentlemen depicted look very conscious of how to perform amongst their peers; they are part of a selective group who knows what is at stake in the evening. In order to distance themselves from those who never would dine in rooms like this, they needed to know how to handle themselves among the elaborate pieces of equipage. Fashionable objects represented "a badge of membership in class-conscious social groups. As the outward signs of status, consumer goods and the social arts they were used to perform served, first, as shared symbols of group identity and, second, as devices that social climbers imitated in hopes of ascending the social ladder."<sup>111</sup> Visual representations of the act of wine bibbing, such as this one, acknowledge the key role this ritual played in society. By

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<sup>109</sup> Collection of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. It was not until 1824 that Sargent painted a similar version of a tea party. For a comparison of the two paintings, see Jane C. Nylander, "Henry Sargent's Dinner Party and Tea Party," *The Magazine Antiques* CXXI no. 5 (May 1982): 1172-1183.

<sup>110</sup> The cooler depicted with a fitted metal interior and a drain spigot underneath could easily be the same one currently in the Museum of Fine Arts Boston collection which is similar in appearance and was given by a Sargent descendent.

<sup>111</sup> Carson, "The Consumer Revolution in Colonial America: Why Demand?" 522.

comparing them to contemporary written descriptions, we can conclude that they offer an accurate depiction of the way in which wine accessories were handled.

These same gentlemen, however, were also known for their over indulgence in wine and their less than genteel way of handling themselves when drunk. It seems that the bonding experience or the attempts at forming a cohesive group within society involved participating at two levels. The more serious aspect occurred in the early part of the tasting when men showed off their knowledge of wines and the proper handling of the beverage. This then led to the second half of the event, which focused on capacity and the competitive sport of getting drunk. In 1744, Alexander Hamilton made note that some gentlemen believed “a man could not have a more sociable quality or enduement [sic] than to be able to pour down seas of liquor and remain unconquered while others sunk under the table.”<sup>112</sup> Mary Bagot, wife of the British Ambassador, noted a party given by the Baron and Baroness Hyde de Neuville in Washington, DC in the beginning of the nineteenth century where “the men most of them drunk & running at the champagne and Madeira which they drank like savages.”<sup>113</sup> And, Englishman John Lambert observed during his travels in the States from 1806 to 1808 that “the wine flows in abundance and nothing affords them greater satisfaction than to see their guests drop gradually under the table after dinner.”<sup>114</sup> Although written by an Englishman to his architect, the following

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<sup>112</sup> Carl Bridenbaugh, ed., *Gentleman's Progress: The Itinerary of Dr. Alexander Hamilton* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1992), 43.

<sup>113</sup> David Hosford, "Exile in Yankeeland: The Journal of Mary Bagot 1816-1819," *Records of the Columbia Historical Society* 52 (1984): 45. Quoted in Carson, *Ambitious Appetites: Dining, Behavior, and Patterns of Consumption in Federal Washington*, 148.

<sup>114</sup> John Lambert, *Travels through Lower Canada and the United States of America in the Years 1806, 1807, and 1808* (London: Richard Phillips, 1810), 147-148. Quoted in James C. Jordan III, "The

quotation could just as easily have come from a man in the colonies, since they copied the English in so many of their drinking habits. The author of the 1752 letter stated that his wife “wishes for a room of separation between the eating room and the drawing room, to hinder the ladies from the noise and talk of the men when left to their bottle.”<sup>115</sup>

Similar to the refined parts of the evening, the more raucous aspect of the ritual was also represented in fine art. George Roupel, an amateur artist, painted *Peter Manigault and His Friends* circa 1768.<sup>116</sup> Not unlike the Sargent painting, the Roupel piece offers a social commentary of an actual event occurring in the dining room at Peter Manigault’s house, Steepbrook, just outside of Charleston, South Carolina.<sup>117</sup> In addition to Peter Manigault, Isaac Godin (Manigault’s neighbor), and the artist himself, the other five individuals represented in the black ink and wash image are gentlemen from the colonial military.<sup>118</sup> Each has the words of his toast in a bubble above his head, and the sole servant, asleep on the window seat indicates that this evening has been going on for too long. A broken wine glass is visible on the table along with six opened bottles of wine. Although the evening looks to be somewhat under control, one man has removed another’s wig while calling him a dog.

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Neoclassical Dining Room in Charleston," *Journal of Early Southern Decorative Arts* XIV, no. 2 (1988): 2.

<sup>115</sup> Quoted in Mark Girouard, *Life in the English Country House: A Social and Architectural History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1978), 204.

<sup>116</sup> Collection of the Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum and Library.

<sup>117</sup> See mention of types of wine ordered by Peter Manigault Chapter 1 of this paper.

<sup>118</sup> Rutledge, "After the Cloth Was Removed," 48.

A particularly interesting social analysis of the English and American levels of consumption occurs in a French image, *L'Après-Dînée des Anglais*.<sup>119</sup> This engraving by an unknown artist dates to circa 1814 and refers specifically to English habits. However, it is also an accurate portrayal of what occurred in the homes of American gentlemen in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Because the French had a very different relationship with wine and were appalled by the quantity of it consumed by the English and Americans, this commentary proves to be notable, and I have included it here as an honest contemporary opinion given by an outsider looking in. The French did not view wine as such a marker of distinction, possibly because quality wine was available and affordable to many levels of French society. And since French women did not leave the table after the cloth was removed, excess wine drinking was discouraged.<sup>120</sup>

In addition to the wine bottles and glasses visible in *L'Après-Dînée des Anglais*, there is also a depiction of the multi-faceted function of a sideboard and a man taking advantage of this convenience. Since an intoxicated gentleman would use anything he deemed appropriate to relieve himself, Thomas Sheraton took it upon himself to design a sideboard, such as the one illustrated in this piece, with a chamber-pot concealed within it. He explained that it was “made to hide itself in the end rail as

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<sup>119</sup> British Museum collection.

<sup>120</sup> A visitor to Monticello noted that Jefferson served dinner in the French style and that the women remained at the table (Diane L. Berger, ““Pray Let Them Be Neat and Fashionable or Send None”: Dining in Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century America, an Exploration of Ritual and Equipage with a Case Study of Virginia Probate Records” (Master's Thesis, George Washington University, 1990), 44). Jefferson endorsed moderation with regards to any alcohol consumption.

much as possible, both for look and secrecy.”<sup>121</sup> Secrecy did not actually seem to be a concern to these men, according to the French traveler Faujas de Saint-Fond, who was a guest of an English gentleman in his country house near the end of the eighteenth century. In addition to complaining that the ladies were left too long in the withdrawing room while the men drank to excess after dinner, he also noted that “in the pretty corners of the room the necessary convenience is to be found. This is applied to with so little ceremony that the person who has occasion to use it does not even interrupt his talk during the operation.”<sup>122</sup> What makes the French image even more amusing is that there is another matching engraving, presumably by the same artist, which portrays English women after the meal looking incredibly stiff and bored as they drink tea in the withdrawing room while they wait for the men to join them.

With this type of behavior, one no longer wonders why women started the prohibition movement and why the men were so against it. A prohibitionist male in colonial America would have been considered a lunatic. Bertram Wyatt-Brown notes in the book, *Southern Honor: Ethics and Behavior in the Old South* that “in the struggle over which would be a greater commitment, the husband’s loyalty to male friends or to his wife, nothing played so decisive a role as alcohol.”<sup>123</sup> But why was there such a discrepancy between the controlled and formal part of wine bibbing and the drunken

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<sup>121</sup> Thomas Sheraton, *The Cabinet-Maker and Upholsterer's Drawing-Book* (London: T. Bensley, 1802), 364. Also quoted in Elisabeth Donaghy Garrett, *At Home: The American Family, 1750-1870* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1990), 88.

<sup>122</sup> Quoted in Andre Parreaux, *Daily Life in England in the Reign of George the Third*, trans. Carola Congreve (London: Allen & Unwin, 1969), 37.

<sup>123</sup> Bertram Wyatt-Brown, *Southern Honor: Ethics and Behavior in the Old South* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982), 278. Prohibition was many years in the making. As early as the Revolutionary War years, Dr. Benjamin Rush was advocating for abstention from alcohol. (William David Barry and Nan Cumming, *Rum, Riot, and Reform: Maine and the History of American Drinking* (Portland: Maine Historical Society, 1998), 6).



aftermath? Were these gentlemen pretending to be one type of person when they were actually someone quite different? Were they merely letting down their guards when the women left their presence? In truth, I think the issue is more complex than either of these scenarios. Excess indicated upward mobility. Displaying knowledge of wines, touring the cellars, and properly handling the equipment was just one part of an excessive evening within a fraternity-like atmosphere. Overindulgence and bonding with the boys was the other equally important part of the ritual. Drunkenness was, at times, part of the protocol. Written and visual evidence indicate that the wines and equipage were not the only aspect to acknowledge. The jovial play and camaraderie associated with drinking was also worthy of commentary. It was not until the Victorian era that “polite” and “refined” carried an expectation of reserved behavior throughout an entire evening.

If drinking was a sign of male masculinity, of group and individual identity, a means to an end, how did young gentlemen learn about this important aspect of their lives? Although books on manners were available in the colonies (a copy of Lord Chesterfield’s *Letters to his Son*, published in London in 1774 and in New York in 1775 was owned by Benjamin Chew Sr. in Philadelphia),<sup>124</sup> few mention much on accepted behavior while drinking. Books on the history of wine, individual types of wine, and the logistics of keeping a cellar demonstrate that wine was a topic of importance. Yet, instead of relying on etiquette books, it appears that most young men learned the proper wine-related conduct through their male elders, such as their

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<sup>124</sup> Nancy E. Richards, "The City Home of Benjamin Chew, Sr., and His Family: A Case Study of the Textures of Life," (Cliveden of the National Trust, Inc., 1996), 48.

fathers or uncles. Since knowing the drinking protocol was character-building, young men had to be instructed as early as possible on how to conduct themselves.

Nevertheless, even with instruction, they did not always conform to their fathers' standards. Colonel Landon Carter made note in his journal of his son's deplorable conduct with regards to drinking: "The treatment I met with yesterday is not to be endured from my son....But at Supper I asked if there was not a bottle of wine brought up. Yes, said that fellow, let's have it for last night the Colo. Went to bed, carried the keys with him, and would not have any wine. To be accused so before company when though I went to bed being left alone for everybody went to dancing in the next room, I gave the keys to Parker to get what they wanted...Then the heroe [sic] told the company I denied him wine. I did some months ago ask how he could waste the wine by Powering it out on his Pancakes..."<sup>125</sup>

However, gentlemen, such as Landon Carter, discussed more than the wine itself in their diaries and letters, for beautiful settings were also an integral part of the wine-bibbing ritual. When Josiah Quincy, Jr. of Massachusetts visited Miles Brewton at his noteworthy Charleston townhouse on March 7, 1773, he critiqued the surroundings as well as the wine: "By odds the richest wines I ever tasted: Exceeds Mr. Hancock's, Vassall's, Phillips's and others much in flavour, softness, and strength. I toast all your friends, Sir. Each gentleman gave his toast round in succession. ...At Mr. Brewton's side board was very magnificent plate: a very large exquisitely wrought goblet, most excellent workmanship and singularly beautiful."<sup>126</sup>

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<sup>125</sup> Greene, ed., *The Diary of Colonel Landon Carter of Sabine Hall, 1752-1778*, vol. II, 1009-1010.

<sup>126</sup> "Journal of Josiah Quincy, Junior, 1773," 446.

As Josiah Quincy suggests, all of the objects used during the consumption of wine enhanced the overall effect of the evening. Sarah Richards notes in *Eighteenth-Century Ceramics*: “Consumer goods were drawn into active use and made to signify in ways which were instrumental in forming a person’s sense of self, affirming a sense of shared social and cultural belonging, and at the same time maintaining a distance from those unable to acquire the skills and material evidence of ‘polite’ conduct.” Society became “increasingly conscious of a link between a sense of individual worth, the ownership of goods, and the mechanisms by which things could be made to carry meanings beyond their ostensible function.”<sup>127</sup> Thus, the atmosphere created during this ritual was multi-dimensional.

Whereas travel diaries and letters written by women often mention tea as a subject of interest and as an underlying factor in establishing the economic class of the participants, those written by men, as can be seen throughout this paper, frequently focus on wine in this manner. Even though men did consume tea, they seemed more interested in discussing matters related to wine. Who had the most wine bottles in his cellar; who had the best; who knew the most about his wines and the proper way of consuming them? These were all questions asked when discussing a man’s place within his particular society. The best wine and equipage were extremely extravagant, and the presence of them established perceived structures of power, affecting both physical space as well as social conceptions. Frenchman Comte de Ségur wrote to his

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<sup>127</sup> Sarah Richards, *Eighteenth-Century Ceramics: Products for a Civilized Society* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999), 1-2. For more on this, see Mary Douglas and Baron Isherwood, *World of Goods* (New York: Basic Books, 1979).

wife during a visit to America in the late eighteenth century about the excesses of both tea and wine drinking: "My health continues excellent, despite the quantity of tea one must drink with the ladies out of gallantry, and of the Madeira all day long with the men out of politeness."<sup>128</sup> "Too much", however, was the best way for each gender to guarantee a top rung on the social ladder.

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<sup>128</sup> Quoted in Rodris Roth, "Tea-Drinking in Eighteenth-Century America: Its Etiquette and Equipage," in *Material Life in America, 1600-1860*, ed. Robert Blair St. George (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1988), 445.

### Chapter 3: Equipage

“If God had intended Man to drink water, He would not have made him with an elbow capable of raising a wine glass” – Benjamin Franklin

In addition to the many personal accounts of the ritual of wine-drinking, surviving objects confirm the importance of this rite in the lives of eighteenth and nineteenth-century upper-class gentlemen. Enormous sums of money were spent on sterling silver, imported glass, and mahogany furniture as dining and wine drinking became symbols of eighteenth-century gentility. Being able to afford quality imported wine and serve it with all the correct paraphernalia meant that you had reached the level of society where you could supply the ultimate dining experience. Based on the artifacts found, it appears that some gentlemen spared no expense in pursuit of this aim.

How did all of this wine get from the vineyard to the table and what objects were used to accent the social ritual which coincided with drinking this beverage? In early America, this process was a complicated, rule-driven exercise. The accoutrements were vital to the sophisticated atmosphere these gentlemen were attempting to create and “were in truth but outward signs of what the inhabitants hoped would be an inward grace.”<sup>129</sup> Anthropologist Mary Douglas explores in her book *Natural Symbols* how the implications of participating in rituals, for instance those involving the consumption of wine, were part of a restricted code and could be conveyed along standardized non-verbal channels such as through the use of objects. She further

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<sup>129</sup> Richard L. Bushman, *The Refinement of America* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1992), xi-xiii.

describes how the codes deriving from rituals allowed “a person to perceive his identity as part of his immediate social world; personal and social integration [were] achieved together.”<sup>130</sup>

Robert Roberts, the African American butler at Gore Place in Waltham, Massachusetts,<sup>131</sup> observed in his *House Servant's Directory* that “you must think that ladies and gentlemen that have splendid and costly articles, wish to have them seen and set out to the best advantage.”<sup>132</sup> In the eighteenth century, when having the basic ingredients for a fairly comfortable life (a house with several rooms, food prepared in a variety of ways, and somewhat fashionable clothing) became more commonplace, the elite focused on filling their elaborate houses with frivolous objects in order to truly separate themselves from ordinary people. Conspicuous wine consumption led to an array of equipage that is almost incomprehensible to us today. What better way to indicate that you have reached the top of society, than to dedicate your time and funds to such a multifaceted pastime?

### Section 1: Case Study of Annapolis

In an article in the August 26<sup>th</sup> issue of the 1746 *Maryland Gazette*, the author, Horatius (a pseudonym), claimed that “a refined and polite Gentleman ... understands how to lay his Garden, Model his house, fancy his Esquipage [sic], appoint his table, and improve a leisure Hour.”<sup>133</sup> Not only were the Annapolis elite schooled in the types of wine that should be gracing their tables, they were also importing the

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<sup>130</sup> Mary Douglas, *Natural Symbols* (London: Barrie and Jenkins, 1973), 54, 191.

<sup>131</sup> Home of Christopher Gore, Governor of Massachusetts in 1809.

<sup>132</sup> Robert Roberts, *The House Servant's Directory* (Boston: Munroe and Francis, 1827), 48-49.

<sup>133</sup> Quoted in Shackel, *Personal Discipline and Material Culture*, 71.

appropriate objects to accompany the wine's consumption. Below I will discuss objects listed in invoices and Annapolis inventories, and later in this chapter I will elaborate on the function of each object.<sup>134</sup>

Archaeological digs in Annapolis have unearthed fragments of wine equipage from the sites of various ornate houses. One such building is the Calvert House on State Circle, built by Governor George Calvert in 1728. Included in this collection are bottle seals (all predate the time-period of this paper), wine bottles, and wine glasses with various decorative stems. The fragments of glass stems are particularly interesting, for they include plain or "neat" stems as well as examples of air twists and color twists. Included in a group of circa 1740 to 1780 straight stems are an opaque white ribbon twist stem, an opaque white gauze-type stem, and a stem of spiral gauze within a single narrow spiral band. Also in this collection of fragments were several examples of a short drawn stem, each still attached to parts of its base and bowl. These are typical of the glass produced by John Frederick Amelung in Maryland circa 1780 to 1805 (more on Amelung will be discussed later in this chapter). Although these various glass pieces represent the types of glassware ordered and used in Annapolis in the eighteenth century, it is unlikely that all of them belonged specifically to wine glasses. Clients often ordered other varieties of stemware to match their wine glasses and vice versa.

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<sup>134</sup> Many of the inventories list quantities of empty bottles. Because they had little value when empty and could have been used for a variety of liquids, I have not made note of them here.

Additional fragments discovered during the dig at the Calvert House include a round glass ball that is typical of the top of a ground stopper used in decanters from 1730 onward and the base of a square, dark green case bottle containing a few inches of solidified red residue. Without testing the residue, it is impossible to say whether it was wine or perhaps something medicinal. However, eighteenth-century wines were known to have had heavy sediment, and the color of this material is appropriate for a dark wine. One of the most exciting discoveries at the Calvert House was two intact bottles still containing their circa 1750 Madeira, found resting at the bottom of a well.<sup>135</sup>

A demand among local clients for wine-related equipage is evident by numerous surviving Annapolis-made objects as well as by records indicating the types of acquisitions made by Annapolitans. John Shaw (wk. 1770-1829), a well-known cabinetmaker in the Maryland area, wrote the following to his client, General William Smallwood in 1784 regarding a sideboard he was close to completing: “I Shall be glad you would Send to the glass man about the bottles as I Expect to finish the Table very Soon.”<sup>136</sup> The bottle drawers in Shaw’s sideboards were usually concealed behind a cupboard door on either end of the sideboard. Some of these drawers were removable and had handles cut into the sides so that they could be carried around the dining table.<sup>137</sup> Provenances for surviving examples indicate that numerous Annapolis residents purchased sideboards from Shaw. One example was possibly constructed

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<sup>135</sup> All of the Calvert archaeological pieces are in the Historic Annapolis Foundation collection.

<sup>136</sup> Chancery Court Papers 1819, Folder 2, Maryland State Archives. Quoted in William Voss Elder III and Lu Bartlett, *John Shaw: Cabinetmaker of Annapolis* (Baltimore: Baltimore Museum of Art, 1983), 20.

<sup>137</sup> Example of such a sideboard is in the Baltimore Museum of Art collection (BMA1932.31.1).



circa 1785 for Jeremiah Townley Chase, who lived in the Hammond-Harwood House from 1789 until his death in 1828.<sup>138</sup> His 1828 inventory listed a sideboard valued at ten dollars. According to family tradition, another 1797 Shaw sideboard was made for John Randall of Annapolis.<sup>139</sup>

John Shaw sold other wine-related pieces as well, such as cellarets and bottle stands. A labeled and dated 1795 Shaw cellaret has a false front to simulate two small drawers over one long drawer with the actual access to the piece being a hinged top. The interior is fitted with partitions to accommodate six vertical bottles on each side of a center section with a removable caddy.<sup>140</sup> A similar example of this type of cellaret was made circa 1790 to 1800 for D. Dennis Claude of Annapolis.<sup>141</sup> Bottle stands were pieces of furniture resembling small tables on tripod feet, with tabletops that were fitted with individual bottle and glass holders. The entire top usually rotated on the stand. In 1780 Edward Lloyd IV purchased a bottle stand from Shaw costing four pounds.<sup>142</sup> Other examples of equipage made in Annapolis included bottle boards and dumbwaiters. Bottle boards were portable mahogany trays with partitions made to accommodate bottles. They were almost always listed in advertisements next to tea boards. The local cabinetmaker, William Slicer advertised in the *Maryland Gazette* on June 1, 1769 that he made “dumb-Waiters” and “Bottle-Boards.”<sup>143</sup>

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<sup>138</sup> See the description of this house in Chapter 4 and 5.

<sup>139</sup> Elder III and Bartlett, *John Shaw: Cabinetmaker of Annapolis*, 76-77, 112-114.

<sup>140</sup> Private collection. Similar example on loan at the Hammond-Harwood House in Annapolis.

<sup>141</sup> Elder III and Bartlett, *John Shaw: Cabinetmaker of Annapolis*, 88, 101-102.

<sup>142</sup> Lloyd Papers, Daybook, 1770-1780, MS 2001, M1211, Vol.7. Maryland Historical Society. Quoted in *Ibid.*, 16.

<sup>143</sup> Quoted in *Ibid.*, 40. I will discuss dumbwaiters later in this section.

In addition to wine-related furnishings, silver equipage was also being made and imported into Annapolis. The silversmith William Faris who worked in the town from 1757 to 1804 made a shop drawing for a wine siphon circa 1770, though it is not known whether this form was ever executed in his shop. Also surviving is a circa 1775 silver funnel attributed to Faris, which is engraved with the initials WAP for William and Ann Faris Pitt, along with those of their children and grandchildren. Although it is unmarked and possibly imported, silversmiths did not always mark pieces for their own use.<sup>144</sup> In 1768 Charles Carroll, Barrister ordered silver from London in the form of “two pair of Table Bottle stands with Silver Rimes, with Crest or Coat as Inclosed [sic].”<sup>145</sup> Edward Lloyd IV placed a similar order in 1793 for “6 handsome Silver Bottle Stands with my Arms theron and Letters ELL NB. Let these Bottle Stands be made of the largest size that they suit the largest Wine Decanters.”<sup>146</sup> In addition to the 3 pairs of decanter stands listed in his 1796 inventory (presumably those described above), Lloyd owned 2 small waiters, 3 salvers, and 2 pairs of additional bottle stands, all in silver.<sup>147</sup>

Apparent from inventories and objects found at archaeological sites, glass was being imported into Annapolis at a steady rate. The Maryland firm of Wallace, Davidson & Johnson ordered numerous decanters in 1771, six of which were “Engraved for

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<sup>144</sup> Mark B. Letzer and Jean B. Russo, ed., *The Diary of William Faris: The Daily Life of an Annapolis Silversmith* (Baltimore: The Press at the Maryland Historical Society, 2003), 440, 69. Both the drawing of the siphon and the funnel are in the Maryland Historical Society collection.

<sup>145</sup> “Letters of Charles Carroll, Barrister,” 184.

<sup>146</sup> Lloyd Papers, 1658-1910, MS 2001 Reel 25, Maryland Historical Society. Quoted in Alevizatos, ““Procured of the Best and Most Fashionable Materials:” the Furniture and Furnishings of the Lloyd Family, 1750-1850,” Appendix C.

<sup>147</sup> Talbot County Inventories, Volume JPF, Microfilm Reel WK 597-598: 38-133. Maryland State Archives.

Madeira.” This same firm ordered 1,512 wine glasses between December 1771 and October 1772.<sup>148</sup> Charles Carroll, Barrister requested that the 3 dozen wine glasses, 2 quart decanters, and 2 pint decanters he ordered in 1768 match a glass he sent with the order. Also in this purchase order was a request for 2 square quart-size bottles with ground stoppers and 4 matching pint-size bottles “for a Case to be made Here.”<sup>149</sup> And, in January of 1792 the London merchants Thomas Eden & Co. sent Edward Lloyd IV a set of “wine glass decanters for a sideboard table.”<sup>150</sup> Additional glass objects listed in Lloyd’s inventory were two cut glass salvers, 24 wine glasses, and 95 vessels of glass of different kinds.<sup>151</sup>

Probate inventories, such as Lloyd’s, reveal a variety of accoutrements used by the gentlemen of Annapolis in conjunction with the wide range of wines they were importing. According to Daniel Dulany’s 1754 inventory, he had wine-related accessories stored in his “Great Dining Room,” including 1 salver, 49 ¼ pounds of double flint glass (which is differentiated from the 89 jelly, syllabub, and water glasses listed directly beneath it ), 7 small silver salvers, 2 large silver salvers, and 2

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<sup>148</sup> Wallace, Davidson, and Johnson Order Books, 1771-1774, Chancery Court (Chancery Papers, Exhibits), MSA S528-27, Maryland State Archives.

<sup>149</sup> "Letters of Charles Carroll, Barrister," 188-189. This is similar to John Shaw’s request for bottles to fit the sideboard he was constructing for General Smallwood.

<sup>150</sup> Lloyd Papers, 1658-1910, MS 2001 Reel 21, Maryland Historical Society. Quoted in Alevizatos, ““Procured of the Best and Most Fashionable Materials:” the Furniture and Furnishings of the Lloyd Family, 1750-1850,” Appendix C.

<sup>151</sup> Talbot County Inventories, Volume JPF, Microfilm Reel WK 597-598: 38-133. Maryland State Archives.

silver strainers.<sup>152</sup> As with the variety of wine listed in Daniel Dulany's inventory, none of these objects were listed in his wife's inventory of 1766 (see Chapter 1).

Records pertaining to Richard Chew show that when he died in 1761, he had yet to update his house to have a separate dining room; thus, most of his wine equipage was located in the hall or parlor. Included in the inventory are 2 silver waiters, 1 case with bottles, 1 mahogany cooler with brass hoops, 3 quart decanters, 1 pint decanter, 1 stand with glasses, 2 tin waiters, and 1 mahogany waiter. Although the glasses are not identified by number or type, in that they were listed as being located on a stand is significant since it indicates they were meant to be displayed. Given the variety of other wine accoutrements, we can assume that at least some of these glasses were probably wine glasses.<sup>153</sup>

Although Edmund Rutland did not have a large collection of wine in this cellar at the time of his death (17 bottles of Claret, 11 of Port, and 9 of Lisbon wine), his 1765 probate record includes an unusual object for American inventories: the dumbwaiter. In the eighteenth century this was not typically the more commonly known mechanical device but rather a piece of mahogany furniture on tripod feet with several enclosed shelves for storage. Dumbwaiters were multi-functional and could be used to store a variety of items, including decanters of wine and wine glasses.

Thomas Sheraton described such a piece in his 1803 *Cabinet Dictionary*: "Dumb-

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<sup>152</sup> Prerogative Court Inventories, Volume 84: 47-67. Maryland State Archives. Two silver decanter handles are also listed, but given that they were probably not meant for decanters but rather cruets, I have not included them.

<sup>153</sup> Prerogative Court Inventories, Volume 102: 114-123. Maryland State Archives. Also in Chew's cellar were casks containing hundreds of gallons of an unspecified liquid.

waiter, amongst cabinet-makers, is a useful piece of furniture, to serve in some respects the place of a waiter, whence it is so named. There are different kinds of these waiters, but they are all made of mahogany, and are intended for the use of the dining parlour, on which to place glasses of wine, and plates, both clean and such as have been used.”<sup>154</sup> Rutland also owned 20 wine glasses, 1 quart decanter, and 1 pint decanter.<sup>155</sup>

Evidence of a nice array of wine equipage can also be seen in Governor Eden’s inventory, whose recording was prompted by his return to England during the Revolution. A mahogany wine cooler with brass hoops and stands was located in the Long Room (presumably the dining room on account of the presence of multiple dining tables and numerous chairs). This piece would have been more ornate than the plainer mahogany box and typically rested on a frame with castors. The brass hoops indicate that it was meant to be carried around the room. In the Secretary’s office was a sideboard table with a marble top and a mahogany case with six bottles. Given that this room is listed on the inventory as being next to the Long Room, it probably contained overflow of dining accessories. The mahogany box may have been an earlier piece that was replaced by the more fashionable cooler. The butler’s pantry contained all the small accoutrements for wine consumption in Eden’s house, such as 7 ½ dozen wine glasses, 11 quart decanters with ground stoppers, 4 pint decanters with ground stoppers, 4 leather decanter stands, and 1 silver wine strainer. Not only

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<sup>154</sup> Quoted in Charles F. Montgomery, *American Furniture: The Federal Period 1788-1825* (New York: Bonanza Books, 1978), 394.

<sup>155</sup> Prerogative Court Inventories, Volume 88: 261-265. Maryland State Archives.

did the pantry probably have shelves to store these items, it would have also been a secure location with a lockable door.<sup>156</sup>

With many of these Annapolis probate inventories, descriptive terms were rarely assigned to glassware. This is what makes Doctor Benjamin Kennedy's inventory of 1778 so important, for it includes 1 flowered glass decanter, 11 flowered wine glasses, and 7 plain wine glasses. He also owned 2 leather bottle stands and 1 Japanned waiter. Although Kennedy did not appear to have a supply of wine in storage, he had enough fashionable pieces of equipage to impress any visitor.<sup>157</sup> Another Annapolitan who did not have wine listed in his probate record but obviously entertained gentlemen was Robert Johnson who died in 1774. His 1779 probate record included 2 cases with bottles, 20 wine glasses, and a backgammon board and billiard table (the gaming pieces were listed next to the dining objects).<sup>158</sup>

Joseph Pemberton's 1783 probate record also provides more descriptive detail on glassware used in Annapolis, for he owned 12 "cut" wine glasses, along with 1 bottle case, 7 japanned waiters, 10 decanters, and 4 bottle stands.<sup>159</sup> Although we know individuals, such as the Carrolls, were placing orders for cut glass, often appraisers did not take the time to label the glass as such in inventories. In addition to their notation of 95 pieces of glass (consisting of tumblers, wine, and jelly glasses), the

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<sup>156</sup> Hood, *The Governor's Palace in Williamsburg: A Cultural Study*, Appendix 5, 299-302.

<sup>157</sup> Anne Arundel County Register of Wills, MSA C88-1: 134, Maryland State Archives.

<sup>158</sup> Anne Arundel County Register of Wills, MSA C88-2: 57-60, Maryland State Archives.

<sup>159</sup> Anne Arundel County Testamentary Papers, Box 4, Folder 89, Maryland State Archives.

appraisers of Aquila Paca's estate in 1789 recorded 1 large waiter, 4 small waiters, 1 dozen wine glasses,<sup>160</sup> 5 small goblets, 3 decanters, and 2 old funnels.<sup>161</sup>

As was mentioned in Chapter One, although Philip Thomas Lee took his wine to his father's house in Charles County during the Revolutionary War, he left his wide variety of wine equipage in his Annapolis house where it would be waiting for him upon his return (except for 3 corkscrews located in Charles County). His probate record of 1780 (not recorded until 1789) provides unusual descriptions of the objects which prove to be noteworthy. Included in the list were 1 large mahogany wine cooler bound with brass, 19 cut wine glasses, 10 wine glasses, 1 half gallon decanter, 4 genteel quart decanters, 1 pint decanter, 5 table decanters, and 2 plain quart wine decanters, 1 large corkscrew, and 1 pewter funnel.<sup>162</sup> For one decanter over another to be labeled as "genteel," it must have been quite an object. Was it engraved with flowers and grapevines? Did it have his initials etched into it? The other term "table decanters" indicates that these pieces were also of an extremely nice quality. They were possibly even engraved with particular names of the beverages such as Madeira or Claret.

Also in Chapter One, I described the impressive amount of wine stored in the cellar of Judge John Brice's house in 1766, but surprisingly, he did not own many pieces of equipage in which to serve this wine. On the other hand, his son, James Brice who

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<sup>160</sup> In comparison, 9 blue and white tea cups and saucers are listed.

<sup>161</sup> Anne Arundel County Register of Wills, MSA C88-2: 299-307, Maryland State Archives.

<sup>162</sup> Charles County Inventories, Maryland Register of Wills 1788-1791, MSA CM386-10: 246-260. Maryland State Archives.

finished building the grand, brick house his father had barely started before his death, had quite a large grouping of wine accoutrements but very little wine itself stored in the building when he died in 1802. James's probate inventory lists 1 liquor case, 95 pieces of glass (containing tumblers, wine and jelly glasses), 13 waiters of different sizes, and 7 glass decanters.<sup>163</sup>

## Section 2: Background on Equipage

How do we make sense of this rich array of equipage in Annapolis households?

Establishing an accurate environment for the activity of wine bibbing was a key element of the ritual. Since wine equipage played a lead role in this environment, it is important to understand the function of each object. Traditionally, wine was made and stored in wooden barrels or "casks" and was shipped intact and left in its original container until the time came to bottle the wine for individual sale or to decant it in one's private cellar. Other storage containers included hogsheads (large casks holding up to one hundred and forty-six gallons of liquid) and pipes (holding up to two hogsheads or four barrels).<sup>164</sup>

When it came to shipping and storage, Madeira differed from other wines. Beginning in the early nineteenth century, Madeira was transferred from wooden casks to demijohns for storage upon delivery to its purchaser. Demijohns were glass or stoneware bottles covered with wickerwork and able to hold up to ten gallons. These containers were rarely labeled in an elaborate fashion. Instead they often were marked

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<sup>163</sup> Anne Arundel County Testamentary Papers, Box 55, Folder 51, Maryland State Archives.

<sup>164</sup> Robin Butler and Gillian Walkling, *The Book of Wine Antiques* (Suffolk: The Antique Collectors' Club, 1986), 132.



with a chalk inscription or a handwritten paper label. Furthermore, the Madeira was usually not named after its vineyard but rather after the boat on which it was shipped or the family name of the person who acquired it.<sup>165</sup>

Dining rooms, where much of this wine was consumed and whose name became more frequent in inventories after the mid-eighteenth century, were males' turf, so to speak.<sup>166</sup> The mistress of the house may have been in charge of instructing the servants with regards to the appearance of the room or the meal, but typically her husband ordered the extravagant items used within the room. Cellarets, wine coolers, and sideboards will be discussed here.

Although somewhat different in function, cellarets and wine coolers have fairly similar appearances. Basically, they are wooden boxes constructed with or without legs and seem to have been placed underneath the sideboard when not in use. Sarah Anna Emery observed in her hometown of Newburyport, Massachusetts, in the early 1800s: "beneath (the mahogany sideboard) generally stood an ornamental liquor case, and upon the top were some half dozen cut-glass decanters filled with wine, brandy, and other liquors; these were flanked by trays of wine glasses and tumblers."<sup>167</sup> While

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<sup>165</sup> Berk, *A Century Past: A Celebration of the Madeira Party in America*, 6-9.

<sup>166</sup> Specified dining rooms became more and more prevalent as the eighteenth-century progressed. Most of the houses lived in by the Annapolis gentlemen whose inventories were discussed in Chapter 1, as well as earlier in this chapter had dining rooms. As dining became a symbol for affluence, these rooms became one of the most valued in the home. For more information see: Mark R. Wenger, "The Dining Room in Early Virginia," in *Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture*, ed. Thomas Carter and Bernard L. Herman (Columbia, Missouri: University of Missouri Press, 1989).

<sup>167</sup> Quoted in Elisabeth Donaghy Garrett, "The American Home: The Dining Room," *The Magazine Antiques* (October 1984): 915.

entertaining, these small pieces of furniture (or, little cellars) could easily be moved closer to the table.

The interiors of cellarets, or ‘diminutive cellars,’ were usually divided into six or twelve spaces for individual bottles or decanters. With the emergence of the empire or late neoclassical period, the appearance of the previously popular “neat and plain” cellarets and coolers began to change. Classical designs, such as the octagonal forms of Roman sarcophagi started to dictate their shape.<sup>168</sup> These fashionable storage pieces, although appearing not to be necessary, were, in fact, vital to a gentleman of a certain economic status who was serious about wine drinking. The London Price Books of the late eighteenth century record seven cellaret shapes: two square models, two ovals, one hexagon, one octagon, and an oblong octagon design.<sup>169</sup> Most of these pieces accommodated bottles in a vertical position, but because the wines had a great deal of sediment, it was more advantageous to design interiors which could accommodate horizontal bottles. Thus, when the wine was decanted the sediment was less disturbed.

Although cellarets were made of wood, particularly mahogany, coolers were made of many materials, including porcelain, silver, pewter, and wood and came in many shapes and sizes. Because coolers were used not only for the storage of bottles but

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<sup>168</sup> William Voss Elder III and Jayne E. Stokes, *American Furniture, 1680-1880* (Baltimore: The Baltimore Museum of Art, 1987), 177.

<sup>169</sup> Susan Solony, "Some Unusual Stylistic Preferences in New York Cellaret Design, 1810-1834," *Studies in the Decorative Arts* Fall-Winter (1997-1998): 87.

also for the chilling of wine, the wooden versions had copper or tin linings to accommodate cold water or ice. Many coolers had spigots to drain the water and some could be quite large, as we can see from Laura Richards recollection: "In this room were also the grand piano and the big sideboard, with its wine cooler, a piece of furniture dear to brother Harry and me in a peculiar way. It was an oblong chest of solid mahogany, the hexagonal cover sloping upward toward a trophy of grapes. When I look at it to-day, it is hard to imagine that brother Harry and I used to sit in it, facing each other. Our little boots were probably not at all good for the zinc lining."<sup>170</sup> Americans, however, did not seem to partake in the English tradition of having an extremely large silver cooler for the floor, which was part of a 3-piece set also containing a fountain and a cistern. With this contraption, wine glasses would be rinsed in the fountain, dirty water poured into the cistern and new wine poured from a bottle in the cooler.

Evidence of American and English-made cellarets and coolers can be found in the inventories and original papers of the elite throughout the entire East Coast. Those most frequently listed in the Annapolis inventories were "mahogany bottle cases" or "liquor cases." These less than elaborate descriptive terms probably were used to cover a variety of examples, from the simple bottle case with handles which rested on the floor or table to a more decorative version which rested on legs. From the word "liquor" we can also assume that some of them possibly held more than just wine. Edward Lloyd's storage unit was described as a mahogany case containing six

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<sup>170</sup> Quoted in Garrett, "The American Home: The Dining Room," 913. Thomas Sheraton was one English furniture designer who made no distinction between cellarets and coolers.

bottles, each with a silver stopper and was probably a standing version on castors.

Also found in Annapolis inventories is the term “wine cooler.” Governor Eden had a wine cooler on legs as well as a case with bottles.

From descriptions elsewhere in the states, we can formulate an even better picture of these objects at that time. In 1782, the Philadelphia merchant Richard Vaux ordered the following: 28 dozen plain wine glasses, 28 dozen flint Bumper wine glasses, 12 dozen best plain wine glasses, and “a solid mahogany case on a frame neatly inlaid on Brafs [sic] Box castors. A pair of strong Brafs lifting handles, stop hinges, and fine locke [sic]. Partitions within with green Bays [sic] and 15 flint half Gallon Bottles with ground and cut stoppers.”<sup>171</sup> In 1797 Hugh Thompson of Baltimore ordered from London “a Mahogany Oval Cellerette for 10 bottles lined with lead banded with sattin [sic] wood” for an expensive eight pounds. In the same year, he also ordered from London three dozen fluted and engraved wine glasses, two dozen full-size fluted and engraved champagne glasses, and two dozen fluted and engraved wine coolers.<sup>172</sup> The inventory of Michael Muckenfuss’s belongings, taken in 1808 in Charleston included three cellarets; the largest with a “raised top” was valued at a costly fifty dollars.<sup>173</sup>

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<sup>171</sup> Richard Vaux Business Records, 1782-90, Winterthur Library, Joseph Downs Collection of Manuscripts and Printed Ephemera.

<sup>172</sup> Hugh Thompson Papers, 1793-1824, MS990, Maryland Historical Society. I am grateful to Catherine Arthur at Homewood House for sharing this reference. The type of cooler mentioned would have sat on the table and will be discussed later in this chapter.

<sup>173</sup> E. Milby Burton, *Charleston Furniture, 1700-1825* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1955), 58.

As early as 1779, clients began to purchase sideboards with bottle drawers in England and Ireland. In that same year, the firm of Gillows and Company in Lancaster, England, advertised “a new sort of sideboard table now with drawers etc in a genteel style to hold bottles.”<sup>174</sup> Referring to the English preoccupation with drinking, Robert Adam, the famous designer and architect said: “Accustomed by habit, or induced by the nature of our climate, we indulge more largely [than the French] in the enjoyment of the bottle”<sup>175</sup> – thus there needed to be furniture to accommodate these bottles in an impressive manner. Adam also noted that the French did not put as much effort into the decoration of the dining room since both sexes together retired to another room immediately following their meals. The English and Americans, on the other hand, viewed dining rooms as “the apartments of conversation, in which we are to pass a great part of our time.”<sup>176</sup> Governor Eden and Edward Lloyd’s sideboards with the marble tops were probably examples of the latest English fashion.

American-made sideboards with bottle drawers soon followed, as exemplified by those that John Shaw made in Annapolis. Also, in locations such as Maryland, huntboards became popular. These sideboards without drawers made it necessary to have a separate piece of furniture for the storage of bottles, one possible explanation for the abundance of cellarets in this area.<sup>177</sup> Edward Lloyd IV may have been referring to such a piece in his order of decanters “for a Sideboard Table” (discussed

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<sup>174</sup> Quoted in Garrett, “The American Home: The Dining Room,” 914.

<sup>175</sup> Quoted in Solony, “Some Unusual Stylistic Preferences in New York Cellaret Design, 1810-1834,” 85.

<sup>176</sup> Quoted in Garrett, *At Home: The American Family, 1750-1870*, 80.

<sup>177</sup> Montgomery, *American Furniture: The Federal Period 1788-1825*, 357-358.

earlier in the chapter), although full sideboards were also at times referred to as sideboard tables. The advertisement for the public sale in Charleston of Philip Henry's household furniture made reference to a matching sideboard and wine storage piece by listing a "mahogany side board with a brass hooped cooler."<sup>178</sup> Paired sideboards set into niches were the ultimate display of refinement. After dining in New York in 1771, the artist, John Singelton Copley noted that each of the recessed niches on either side of the fireplace in his friend's dining room contained a sideboard.<sup>179</sup>

Annapolitans would closely watch their wine to decide when it was mature and ready to impress their guests. At that point, the wine needed to be transferred to bottles or decanters.<sup>180</sup> In contrast to bottles seen today with creative labels, bottles at that time were plain, squat varieties with little or no markings.<sup>181</sup> As early as 1650, wine bottles in England were minimally labeled on the shoulder with a glass seal indicating the owner, or sometimes merely the name of the contents.<sup>182</sup> Thomas Lepper, proprietor of a New York glass manufactory, advertised personalized bottles in the 1754 issue of the *New York Gazette*.<sup>183</sup> Two such wine bottles with the initials "RW" were made for Richard Wistar circa 1745 to 1755. He was the son of Caspar Wistar, the founder of

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<sup>178</sup> *South Carolina and American General Gazette*. 28 May, 1778. I am grateful to Jane Spillman at the Corning Museum of Glass for sharing this reference.

<sup>179</sup> Garrett, *At Home: The American Family, 1750-1870*, 87.

<sup>180</sup> Often this was done by well-qualified and trusted servants, under the oversight of the gentleman of the household, which led to an interesting relationship between the two. This will be explored more in Chapter 5.

<sup>181</sup> For an in-depth study of English-made wine bottles see: Pittman, "Morphological Variability in Late Seventeenth and Early Eighteenth-Century English Wine Bottles."

<sup>182</sup> Derek C. Davis, *English and Irish Antique Glass* (New York: Frerick A. Praeger, 1965), 68.

<sup>183</sup> Arlene Palmer, "Glass Production in Eighteenth-Century America: The Wistarburgh Enterprise," *Winterthur Portfolio* 11 (1976): 85.

Wistarburgh Glassworks in Alloway, New Jersey, one of the first successful glass manufactories in the colonies, which was in operation from 1738 until the Revolution.<sup>184</sup> Another bottle, dated 1752, bears the seal of William Savery, a Philadelphia cabinetmaker. It too may also be from the Wistarburgh manufactory.<sup>185</sup>

Although mostly English in origin and not attributable to any known glasshouse, additional seals, such as the one belonging to Annapolis resident Charles Carroll of Carrollton<sup>186</sup> have been discovered displaying other well-known names of American men. These include “Robert Carter / 1713,” “G Wythe / 1768” (first professor of law at the College of William and Mary and a signer of the Declaration of Independence), and “GMA / 1760” for George and Ann Mason, all of Virginia; William de Hart of New Jersey, Henry Remsem of New York, J. Sherburne / 1754 of Portsmouth, New Hampshire and Jonathan Warner of Portsmouth.<sup>187</sup> “GA Hall” seals were found in archaeological digs at the Heyward-Washington House in Charleston, South Carolina. The seals have dates ranging from 1758 to 1812. GA Hall was Heyward’s brother-in-law.<sup>188</sup> An embossed late eighteenth century seal of “C. Pinkney” was discovered at the Miles Brewton house in Charleston, and an identical one was found at Charles Pinkney’s plantation in Mt. Pleasant. Pinkney probably brought the bottle to Brewton as gift, indicating the importance of such a commodity.<sup>189</sup> Brewton’s own eighteenth-

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<sup>184</sup> Ibid.: 75. Object owned by the Corning Museum of Glass and the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

<sup>185</sup> Ibid.: 85. Object owned by the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

<sup>186</sup> Owned by the Historic Annapolis Foundation and discussed in Chapter 1.

<sup>187</sup> Carter: Department of Historic Resources of Virginia collection. Wythe: Colonial Williamsburg collection. Mason: Gunston Hall collection. Hart and Remsem: New-York Historical Society collection. Sherburne and Warner: Warner House collection.

<sup>188</sup> Charleston Museum collection.

<sup>189</sup> Charleston Museum collection.

century marked bottle was discovered during an archaeological dig at his house.<sup>190</sup>

Finally, a wine bottle in the Metropolitan Museum of Art's collection is a nice surviving example of one documenting its ownership and contents. The bottle is impressed with the name "T.C./Pearsall" and printed on a paper label affixed to the body is the importing information: "Madeira Wine / Imported by T.C.P. from Murdock, Masterton and Co. / 1800."

To date there has been very little evidence of African American men drinking imported wine. This recently changed with an extremely pertinent discovery of wine bottle fragments and seals at the James Dexter Site in Philadelphia. Dexter was a free African American who lived in a house on North Fifth Street from 1790 to 1798. This discovery will hopefully lead to further revelations in this area of study.<sup>191</sup> Although all of the above mentioned bottles are interesting to us today as fragments of the past, in their time they were not meant to be placed on the table or even within view of the diners. They would have been kept in a bottle drawer, cellaret or wine cooler.<sup>192</sup>

Corkscrews or bottle openers, which were English made and first appeared in the late seventeenth century, presumably were used for opening more than wine bottles; however every wine-consuming gentleman had to possess one. Thomas Jones of the Chesapeake area purchased a corkscrew in July of 1755, and Benjamin Chew of

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<sup>190</sup> Private collection. I am grateful to Martha Zierden at the Charleston Museum for sharing this information.

<sup>191</sup> I am grateful to Cheryl LaRoche for sharing this information.

<sup>192</sup> Seals with the names of American men are being discovered all the time. As this represents physical evidence of wine consumption in this country, a separate study exclusively on this subject matter is warranted. For more information on wine bottle seals, see: Ivor Noel Hume, *Glass in Colonial Williamsburg's Archaeological Collections*, Colonial Williamsburg Archaeological Series No. 1 (Williamsburg, VA: The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, 1969).



Philadelphia purchased two corkscrews in August of 1768 as a group of goods for his daughter Mary's dowry.<sup>193</sup> Corkscrews have been discovered in archaeological digs along the East Coast and are now housed in collections such as the Department of Historic Resources in Virginia. In Annapolis, Philip Thomas Lee owned four corkscrews. Additionally, one eighteenth-century corkscrew, possibly owned by a Dulany family member, was given in the 1980s to the Historic Annapolis Foundation.

Siphons and funnels with strainers were also part of the necessary accoutrements for transferring wine from one storage container to another. Wines in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries had a great deal of sediment, necessitating the use of a siphon for decanting purposes. By drawing the wine out of its container, rather than pouring it, less of the residue was disturbed. Gentlemen elevated these objects from their utilitarian status by having them made either of silver or, in the case of funnels, also of porcelain and glass. Among the known American-made siphons is a circa 1800 example with an unknown maker's mark of "TH" in the Historic Deerfield collection. The Metropolitan Museum of Art has another American siphon made between 1700 and 1800 also by an unknown maker, which was owned by Lieutenant-Governor Bentham of South Carolina. And the silversmith Samuel Williamson made a siphon in Philadelphia between 1800 and 1810, which is now located in the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

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<sup>193</sup> Gunston Hall Plantation Probate Inventory Database. Richards, "The City Home of Benjamin Chew, Sr., and His Family: A Case Study of the Textures of Life," Appendix III, 84.

Another way to deal with the sediment was to pour the wine through a funnel with a strainer, thus allowing for the loose particles to be captured. A funnel made circa 1780 to 1790 by the Philadelphia maker Richard Humphreys is in the Historic Deerfield Collection, and the inventory of Governor Tryon's New York house, taken after a fire in 1773, lists a silver "decanter funnel."<sup>194</sup> In addition to Philip Thomas Lee of Annapolis owning a pewter funnel, two other Annapolitans, Daniel Dulany and Robert Eden, owned silver strainers, which presumably functioned in a similar manner. Another interesting American piece of silver is a wine taster made by Henricus Boelen of New York City circa 1730.<sup>195</sup> Although this was a common object for a wine connoisseur to possess, few American examples are known; most were imported from England and rarely listed on inventories.

In addition to the large cellarets and coolers mentioned earlier in this chapter, there were also similar, yet smaller examples of these pieces, which held one, two, or four decanters and sat directly on the table. An interesting quadruple cooler of this type is in the Mount Vernon collection. Made in England circa 1790 and plated in silver, the bucket contains four individual holders of pierced silver plate. In October 1789

Washington was quite specific when placing the order for the coolers:

Of plated ware may be made I conceive handsome and useful Coolers for wine at and after dinner. Those I am in need of viz. [sic] eight double ones (for Madeira and claret the wines usually drank at dinner) each of the apertures to be sufficient to contain a pint decanter, with an allowance in the depth of it for ice at bottom so as to raise the neck of the decanter above the cooler; between the apertures a handle is to be placed by which these double coolers may with convenience be removed from one part of the table to the other. For the wine after dinner four quadruple coolers will be necessary...The

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<sup>194</sup> Hood, *The Governor's Palace in Williamsburg: A Cultural Study*, Appendix 6, 303-306.

<sup>195</sup> New-York Historical Society collection.

reason why I prefer an aperture for every decanter or bottle to coolers that would contain two and four is that whether full or empty the bottles will always stay upright and never be at variance with each other.<sup>196</sup>

On August 14, 1797, Washington wrote to Clement Biddle, a friend who handled Washington's business affairs in Philadelphia, regarding two four-bottle coolers, which he left in Philadelphia and wished to have sold. On the same day he wrote to Secretary James McHenry asking for three of the double coolers to be given as tokens of his friendship to McHenry, Colonel Pickering, and Mr. Wolcott.<sup>197</sup>

Another Presidential silver wine cooler in the White House collection, one of four acquired by the future President James Monroe while he was in France and made circa 1798 to 1809 by the famous Parisian silver maker Jean-Baptiste-Claude Odier, is a highly sculptural piece with an elegantly engraved band of grape leaves. The inscription "President's House" was engraved on this cooler at a later date.

"Japanned" coolers such as those in Colonel Edward Darrell's 1802 inventory were probably the size appropriate for table use and were decorated to simulate Chinese lacquer. This style became popular in England and America in the eighteenth century as trade expanded in the Far East. Toleware also became a desired medium for dining accessories. These objects were usually made out of thin sheets of metal, especially tin, and were then painted in various decorative schemes. James Rundlett of Portsmouth, New Hampshire owned a tole decanter holder, which is still located in

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<sup>196</sup> Gerald W.R. Ward, ed., *Becoming a Nation: Americana from the Diplomatic Reception Rooms, U.S. Department of State* (New York: Rizzoli, 2003), 48. I am grateful to James Abbott for sharing this reference.

<sup>197</sup> John C. Fitzpatrick, ed., *The Writings of George Washington*, 39 vols., vol. 36 (Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1931-1944), 10. Ward, ed., *Becoming a Nation: Americana from the Diplomatic Reception Rooms, U.S. Department of State*, 48.

the Rundlett-May House. One additional type of cooler was listed in Edward Lloyd IV's 1796 inventory: 4 china coolers. Although these may have been large enough to be on the floor, they were more apt to be individual ones which sat on the sideboard or dining table.<sup>198</sup>

By the mid-eighteenth century, it had become fashionable for servants to pour the wine into glass decanters which they would either place on the table or pass to the seated gentlemen. According to a 1715 dictionary, a decanter was defined as "a Bottle made of clear Flint-glass, for the holding of Wine, etc. to be pour'd off into a Drinking-Glass."<sup>199</sup> Decanters were mostly imported, the majority being from England or Ireland, and ranged from simple blown varieties to elaborate engraved and cut glass versions in clear or colored assortments. Boston merchant Lewis DeBlois advertised in 1761 that he had received from London and Bristol the 'best' engraved and flowered decanters and wineglasses, which were probably quite similar to the flowered decanter listed in the Annapolis inventory of Benjamin Kennedy.<sup>200</sup> Certain varieties of decanters were "labell'd" meaning that they had the name of the type of wine they were meant to contain engraved on the glass in a way that mimicked a bottle ticket. A merchant advertised in a 1764 edition of the *New York Gazette* that he had the "newest fashioned decanters labeled Madeira,"<sup>201</sup> an example of which was discovered in an archaeological dig of a dry well site at Thomas Jefferson's home,

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<sup>198</sup> Talbot County Inventories, Volume JPF, Microfilm Reel WK 597-598: 38-133. Maryland State Archives.

<sup>199</sup> Quoted in Arlene Palmer, *Glass in Early America* (Winterthur, DE: Henry Francis duPont Winterthur Museum, 1993), 124.

<sup>200</sup> Cleo Witt, Cyril Weeden, and Arlene Palmer Schwind, *Bristol Glass* (Bristol: Redcliffe Press Ltd., 1984), 74. DuBlois advertisement in *Boston Gazette* (June 8, 1761).

<sup>201</sup> Quoted in Hume, *Glass in Colonial Williamsburg's Archaeological Collections*, 25.

Monticello. This circa 1760 to 1770 English decanter has a wheel-engraved cartouche surrounding the word “Madeira” and an elegantly engraved grape motif covers the body. Another rare and important artifact is a lead glass decanter in the Strawberry Banke collection in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, which has the local Sherburne family coat of arms etched into its body. Probably made in England circa 1750 to 1760, this piece is significant because few surviving glass objects have American armorial decoration. The abundance of decanters listed in the Annapolis probate records could be due in part to quantity and variety of wines in these gentlemen’s cellars. Drinking with their contemporaries after dinner required an assortment of appropriate containers to properly hold and display the wine.

Customarily, when wine bottles and decanters were removed from the storage cases and placed either on the table or sideboard, they were set in what was known as a wine slide, otherwise labeled as a stand or coaster. The word “slide” was used to indicate that when thirst beckoned at the other end of the table, the bottle and coaster were literally slid from one end of the table to the other. Since most of the drinking occurred after the tablecloth had been removed, this would have been possible on a table’s highly polished mahogany surface. Examples from the mid-eighteenth century were fairly consistent in shape. Many had hard wood bases and elaborately pierced silver sides. A distinctive turned ribbed pattern in the base helped keep drips off the table. Most decanters had tops or stoppers further reducing the possibility of spillage. Later versions of slides had glass or silver bases. To prevent scratching the surface of the table, the underside of the coaster was covered in felt. This type of object was

fairly prevalent in Annapolis inventories. In fact, it appears to have been the most popular piece of wine equipage after glasses and decanters.

In addition to Edward Lloyd IV and Charles Carroll, Barrister, many other Americans were acquiring silver bottle stands. A pair of silver coasters made by Myer Myers of New York City circa 1770 to 1776 bears an engraving of the Schuyler family crest, owned by Philip Schuyler of New York.<sup>202</sup> Another prominent gentleman, Arthur Middleton of South Carolina, ordered coasters with his initials and crest engraved on them while on a trip to England with his wife, Mary Izard Middleton. They were made circa 1771 to 1772 by the English silversmith, Thomas Langford and are currently owned by the Middleton Place Foundation.<sup>203</sup> In 1768, Charles Harris, a silversmith in Charleston, advertised that he “makes and sells all sorts of new fashionable bottle stands,”<sup>204</sup> and Philip Fithian, a tutor from New Jersey who worked for Robert Carter of Nomini Hall in Virginia, recorded that the Carters purchased a “Pair of elegant Decanter-holders” and a “pair of fashionable Goblets” all in silver plate on September 12, 1774.<sup>205</sup>

Although silver coasters were the most widely sought after, by the end of the eighteenth century, imported red or black papier-mâché coasters with gold foliate

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<sup>202</sup> New-York Historical Society collection. The Schuylers were a prominent family in Albany, New York.

<sup>203</sup> Arthur Middleton (1742-1787) was one of South Carolina’s signers of the Declaration of Independence. I am grateful to Barbara Doyle at Middleton Place for her assistance with this information.

<sup>204</sup> Quoted in Maurie Dee McInnis, *In Pursuit of Refinement: Charlestonians Abroad, 1740-1860* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1999), 273.

<sup>205</sup> Hunter Dickinson Farish, ed., *Journal & Letters of Philip Vickers Fithian 1773-1774: A Plantation Tutor of the Old Dominion* (Charlottesville: The University Press of Virginia, 1957), 189.

patterns on the sides were also popular,<sup>206</sup> along with other materials, such as leather and toleware. In Annapolis, Thomas Stone's inventory of 1788 lists four "gilt paper decanter stands" which were, presumably, of the papier-mâché variety,<sup>207</sup> and an example of a toleware coaster belonging to an American can be seen at the Rundlett-May House in Portsmouth, New Hampshire. Governor Eden's inventory in Annapolis lists four leather bottle stands; Benjamin Kennedy and Edward Lloyd each had two.

Whereas it was common for wine bottles to be labeled in some fashion, decanters typically were not, which gave rise to yet another accessory, the bottle ticket. These tickets, or labels as we frequently refer to them today, came into use around 1730 and were usually made of a flat piece of cast chiseled, chased, engraved, or pierced silver with a simple chain to hang elegantly around the neck of the decanter. They were also made of porcelain and, very rarely, of glass. On the same trip to England when he ordered the coasters, Arthur Middleton acquired a variety of silver wine labels engraved with the names: Madeira, white wine, Claret, Mountain, Champagne, Hock, Burgundy, and Port.<sup>208</sup> Eight silver "decanter tickets" were also listed in Governor Tryon's New York inventory of 1773.<sup>209</sup> Few American-made wine labels are known, presumably because it was easier for silversmiths to import these items since such a small piece of silver was barely profitable. One known American label is engraved "Madeira" and stamped with the mark of Louis Boudo, a Charleston

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<sup>206</sup> Peter Brown, "Stands, Coasters, Wagons, and Chariots for the Table," *The Magazine Antiques* (1996): 526.

<sup>207</sup> Charles County Inventories, Maryland Register of Wills 1785-1788, MSA CM386-9: 489-494. Maryland State Archives.

<sup>208</sup> Middleton Place Foundation collection. I am grateful to Barbara Doyle for her assistance with this information.

<sup>209</sup> Hood, *The Governor's Palace in Williamsburg: A Cultural Study*, Appendix 6, 303-306.

silversmith who worked from 1786 to 1827. However, the Prince of Wales feather design on the top, which in England was used exclusively by the Bateman silversmiths, suggests that this particular piece was imported to Charleston and marked by Boudo before sale.<sup>210</sup>

Although labels denoting Champagne do exist, they are rare since the short life span of an opened bottle of Champagne precludes its long-term placement in a decanter. Some scholars believe the use of this label was merely a tactic for showing off the excesses one could afford, though, the historian, Ann Hansen, notes that the name “champagne” referred to any red or white wine produced in the Champagne region of France. Thus, labels could conceivably have been used for the non-effervescent variety.<sup>211</sup> The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, has a “Champagne” silver label in its collection, presumably made by Thomas Hammersley of New York circa 1780. It is perplexing to note that bottle tickets were not recorded in Annapolis probate inventories. Although there is no clear reason for this, I find it impossible to believe that that they were never used by the residents of this town.

Another piece of silver that graced the tables and sideboards of the gentlemen of Annapolis was the salver, which refers to a flat serving form similar to a tray but frequently elevated on feet or a base. This object had multiple uses, for it could hold either tea or wine equipage. In doing so, it not only kept spills from the table, it also

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<sup>210</sup> Captain Sir Thomas Barlow, "An Early 19th Century Label from America," *Wine Label Circle Journal* (2000): 259. The label is in the Metropolitan Museum of Art's collection.

<sup>211</sup> Ann Natalie Hansen, "The Social History of the Wine Label," *Silver Magazine* XXI, no. IV (1988): 31.



symbolically lifted the beverage in importance. At times, especially in the Annapolis region, these objects were frequently referred to as waiters. On June 8, 1789, George Washington's personal secretary, Tobias Lear, wrote to Clement Biddle in Philadelphia: "...the President is desirous [sic] of getting a sett [sic] of those waiters, salvers, or whatever they are called, which are set in the middle of the dining table..."<sup>212</sup>

Since silver generally survives better than glass, there are numerous examples of elaborate silver salvers that can be traced back to important men of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, including Daniel Dulany of Annapolis. Many even have the family's initials or coat of arms engraved in the center, such as an elaborately chased salver executed circa 1754 in Philadelphia by Philip Syng, Jr. This piece, located in the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, was made for the wedding of Edward and Sarah Penington and is decorated with flowers, c-scrolls, and leaves around a centrally engraved cipher. An English salver in the Historic Charleston Foundation collection is engraved with the arms of Lieutenant Governor William Bull II and was made circa 1762 by Samuel Courtauld I. And a New York salver made by John Heath circa 1765 to 1770 was designed in the rococo style and sits on four ball-and-claw feet. Engraved in the center within a cartouche of c-scrolls and foliage is the Schuyler family coat of arms.<sup>213</sup> Japanned waiters, similar in style to the Japanned coolers, were also available. Both Benjamin Kennedy and Joseph Pemberton of Annapolis

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<sup>212</sup> Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Manuscript Department. Quoted in Susan Detweiler, *George Washington's Chinaware* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1982), Appendix.

<sup>213</sup> Winterthur Museum collection. See mention of the Schuyler family in the section on bottle coasters.

owned them, and although these waiters would have been fashionable, they were not as practical as silver for frequent and long-term use.

Like decanters, glasses were usually imported from England or Ireland, particularly prior to the Revolution. When free trade occurred after the War, they also frequently came from Germany, Italy, and the Netherlands, among other countries. The novelty of wine glasses was that their shape had a deliberate function. The long stem distanced the wine from the table, giving the liquid an unusual importance, and the small vase-shape at the top was thought to enhance the color and brightness of the beverage.<sup>214</sup> Glassware was typically described in invoices and inventories, including those related to Annapolitans, either by its appearance: “plain,” “neat,” “enameled,” “cut” or by the type of wine it was meant to hold such as “claret.” Additionally, fragments of wine glasses of all shapes and colors have been found in archaeological sites around the country, including ones with plain air-twist, colored air-twist, and faceted stems.<sup>215</sup> The air-twist design was created by inserting air traps into the stem of the glass and then drawing the air out into spiral patterns; this style was frequently referred to as a “worm’d” glass.<sup>216</sup> On August 4, 1763, William Robert advertised in the *Maryland Gazette* the “best worm’d wine glasses.”<sup>217</sup> By the 1750s, but particularly between 1760 and 1775, opaque white threads were used to create spiral and gauze designs within stems. White was the most popular color of these enamel-

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<sup>214</sup> Margaret Visser, *The Rituals of Dinner* (New York: Penguin Books, 1991), 242-243.

<sup>215</sup> Examples can be seen in collections all over the East Coast, including Colonial Williamsburg, Department of Historic Resources in Virginia, Strawberry Banke, and Historic Annapolis Foundation.

<sup>216</sup> Ivor Noel Hume, *A Guide to Artifacts of Colonial America* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1970), 193.

<sup>217</sup> *Maryland Gazette*, MSA SC2731-2-6. Maryland State Archives.

twist glasses in the colonies but green, blue, and red enamel-twist wine glasses have also been discovered in archeological digs.<sup>218</sup> In December of 1771 Robert Cary sent an invoice to George Washington for “3 dozn Enamel wine Glasses,” and in the *South Carolina Gazette* of 1763, Charleston merchant, Walter Mansell, advertised: “wormed and enameled wine-glasses,” possibly referring to a combination of air-twist and opaque-twist in one stem (similar to the stem fragment found at the Calvert House in Annapolis and discussed earlier in this chapter).<sup>219</sup> A few years later, wine glasses with wheel-cut stems of hexagonal facets and wheel-engraved bowls with a variety of designs became all the rage.<sup>220</sup> As noted before, specific types of glass were rarely identified in Annapolis inventories, except for in Benjamin Kennedy’s, which listed flowered wine glasses and in Philip Thomas Lee’s, which listed cut wine glasses.

Before the Revolution, the glass manufacturers of Bristol, England supplied much of the colonies’ glassware. Frederick Rhineland, a New York glass and china merchant primarily used Vigor and Stevens at Redcliff Backs for his supply of Bristol glass. Rhineland specified which type of stem he desired, from enamel-twist to “diamond” (presumably facet-cut in a diamond pattern) and which bowl shape, including globe, pear, or lemon.<sup>221</sup> From Vigor & Stevens, Rhineland also ordered “Spanish” wine glasses. Although this particular form is not known to us today,

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<sup>218</sup> Hume, *Glass in Colonial Williamsburg's Archaeological Collections*, 22. There were no colored enamel twist stems in the small grouping of archaeological fragments I was given access to in Annapolis, but this does not mean they were unavailable or unused in the town.

<sup>219</sup> “George Washington’s Papers.” Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Microfilm Reel 116. Palmer, *Glass in Early America*, 67.

<sup>220</sup> Hume, *A Guide to Artifacts of Colonial America*, 194.

<sup>221</sup> Witt, Weeden, and Schwind, *Bristol Glass*, 74-75, 77-81. The Rhineland business papers are located in the New-York Historical Society collection.

advertisements for this specific shape of glass appeared in the *South Carolina Gazette* on November 20, 1752, and in the *New York Mercury* on April 4, 1762.<sup>222</sup>

As was discussed earlier in this chapter, customers at times placed individualized orders of glassware to reflect their wealth and taste. In 1796, William Smith of Boston purchased an elaborate set of glass from Bristol, which included decanters, wines, tumblers and rummers, all with the initials “WS” engraved on a shield.<sup>223</sup> Just like Charles Carroll, Barrister, Peter Lyons of Virginia wrote to a London agent in 1771 requesting wine glasses of a very particular variety: “I have given Captn. Robinson a Wine Glass as a pattern for two dozen mentioned in the Invoice to be sent to me.”<sup>224</sup> By the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries many advertisements record large quantities of glass shipments, and inventories usually list a wide range of stemware. A 1797 invoice from a Bristol glass manufacturer to T & T Powell, merchants of Baltimore, listed the following: “6 quart decanters rings cut out fluted, engraved to pattern, 12 pint decanters to match, 3 dozen clarettes fluted and engraved, 3 dozen wines ditto, 2 dozen full size Champaign glasses ditto, and 2 dozen wine coolers ditto.” Presumably, these were ordered by Hugh Thompson, whose cellaret order was mentioned earlier in this chapter.<sup>225</sup>

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<sup>222</sup> Arlene Palmer Schwind, “English Glass Imports in New York, 1770-1790,” *Journal of Glass Studies* 25 (1983): 182.

<sup>223</sup> Witt, Weeden, and Schwind, *Bristol Glass*, 84. The objects are located in the Portland Museum of Art collection.

<sup>224</sup> Francis Norton Mason, ed., *John Norton & Sons, Merchants of London and Virginia* (Richmond: Dietz Press, 1937), 191.

<sup>225</sup> Hugh Thompson Papers, 1793-1824, MS990, Maryland Historical Society. Quoted in Dwight P. Lanmon, “The Baltimore Glass Trade, 1780-1820,” *Winterthur Portfolio* 5 (1969): 22.

Not all stemware was imported since American-made eighteenth-century wine glasses do exist, though not in great quantities. One of the earliest examples of a wine glass with rococo decoration is attributed to Henry William Stiegel, owner of American Flint Glass Manufactory in Manheim, Pennsylvania, America's first manufacturer of colored glass. Commemorating the marriage of Stiegel's daughter, Elizabeth, to William Old in 1773, the piece is made of lead glass with an English-style opaque white-twist stem and an engraved bowl with a rose decoration and a foliate cartouche enclosing the inscription "W & E OLD."<sup>226</sup> Three surviving wine glasses with "GR" and a surrounding wreath with flowers were made for George and Metha Repold of Baltimore by the New Bremen Glassmanufactory circa 1785. George Repold was a merchant who did business with John Frederick Amelung, the owner of the New Bremen glasshouse. Repold's inventory listed three dozen wine glasses.<sup>227</sup>

While glass tended to be the most commonly used medium for stemware during this time, other materials, most notably silver, were also available. Silver goblets tended to be reserved for use during a ceremonious occasion. Thomas Jefferson designed a silver goblet around 1789, the drawing of which is located at the Massachusetts Historical Society and the goblets, made in France by Claude-Nicolas Delanoy, are owned by Monticello.

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<sup>226</sup> Morrison H. Heckscher and Leslie Greene Bowman, *American Rococo, 1750-1775: Elegance in Ornament* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1992), 230.

<sup>227</sup> Dwight P. Lanmon, et al., *John Frederick Amelung: Early American Glassmaker* (Corning: The Corning Museum of Glass Press, 1990), 84. The glasses are in the Corning Museum of Glass collection.

Regardless of whether one was using glass or silver stemware, the protocol for arranging wine glasses was of paramount importance. Robert Roberts in his *House Servants Directory* of 1827 suggested displaying them on the sideboard in a semicircle: “Your glasses should form a crescent or half circle, as this looks sublime. If you should have a light on your sideboard, you must leave a vacant place behind your glasses for it; in forming the crescent, your highest glasses must be the farthest off, the smallest ones in the inner circle...”<sup>228</sup> One wonders whether Edward Lloyd was attempting to create just such a symbolic display when he specifically noted that the decanters he ordered in 1792 were for a sideboard table.

Yet another extravagant element of this ritual was the ability to serve wine in chilled glasses, which necessitated an additional piece of equipage called the monteith. The first known written reference to this particular object was made by Anthony Wood, a British antiquarian, who wrote in 1683: “This yeare [sic] in the summer time came up a vessel or bason notched at the brims to let drinking glasses hang there by the foot so that the body or drinking place might stand in the water to cool them.”<sup>229</sup> Many of the early monteiths came with a detachable collar so that they could also function as punch bowls. These elaborate display items were made in many materials, including silver, pewter, glass, porcelain, and tole. In the 1790s Joseph Barrell of Boston referred to his silver plated set of coolers as “two for glasses and four for

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<sup>228</sup> Roberts, *The House Servant's Directory*, 48.

<sup>229</sup> Quoted in Jessie McNab, “The Legacy of a Fantastical Scot,” *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* (1961): 173.

decanters.”<sup>230</sup> Monteiths typically rested away from the table, either on a sideboard or smaller table, where a servant had easy access to them. By the mid-eighteenth century, the French were making an object called a verrière, which was a shallower, oval version of the monteith. Usually made of delicately-decorated French porcelain, it was intended for the table.

Americans were aware of the popularity of monteiths and verrières and ordered them from abroad. A plain English creamware verrière circa 1780 to 1810, originally used by a family in Greenland, New Hampshire, is currently in Strawberry Banke’s collection. Because this family was not known to travel or to collect items, we can assume the monteith was acquired by them in the early nineteenth century. In the collection at Monticello is a circa 1787 Sèvres hard-paste porcelain verrière, which belonged to Thomas Jefferson, and, in the Reeves Center Collection at Washington and Lee University is a Chinese Export porcelain monteith painted with the coat of arms of the Clement family of Philadelphia surrounded by a border of grapevines in polychrome enamels and gold. Although I have yet to discover any monteiths or verrières listed in Annapolis inventories, individuals in the Maryland and Virginia regions did own such pieces. In Orange County, Virginia Alexander Spotswood’s 1741 inventory listed one monteith, and in Williamsburg, James Geddy’s inventory taken in 1744 included a pewter monteith.<sup>231</sup> Small numbers of American-made silver monteiths are known, especially in the north, such as the one made by Daniel

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<sup>230</sup> Quoted in Louise Conway Belden, *The Festive Tradition: Table Decoration and Desserts in America, 1650-1900* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1983), 245.

<sup>231</sup> John D. Davis, *English Silver at Williamsburg* (Williamsburg: Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, 1976), 44. I am grateful to Mark Letzer for sharing this source with me.

Henchman of Boston and presented to the President of Dartmouth College by John Wentworth, Royal Governor of New Hampshire to commemorate the college's first graduation in 1771.<sup>232</sup>

A final object that appeared on the table for the same purpose as the monteith was one called a rinse, which was a small, individual glass cooler, placed at each setting on a table. Rinses were used for either cleaning glasses between wines or for chilling them so that they could hold white wine or champagne. Examples of nicely etched English glass rinses marked "JM" for Joseph Manigault" are currently owned by the Charleston Museum.

In colonial America, no other individual element of dining required the number of pieces of equipage as wine consumption, which indicates the importance placed on this ritual. The public auction listing of William Bingham's property in Philadelphia in November of 1805 represents an accurate account of the variety of wine equipage owned by an elite member of society at that time. Included in the sale was a mahogany wine cooler, 25 plain wine glasses, 32 figured wine glasses, 37 figured claret glasses, 19 champagne glasses, 2 cut glass quart decanters, 11 pint cut glass decanters, 2 large round waiters, 2 small round waiters, 6 wine labels, 2 silver goblets gilt inside, 1 strainer, and 1 pair of coasters.<sup>233</sup> Benjamin Chew Sr.'s purchases from 1774 through 1801 also represent a wide variety of wine paraphernalia. They

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<sup>232</sup> Hood Museum of Art collection.

<sup>233</sup> Robert C. Alberts, *The Golden Voyage: The Life and Times of William Bingham 1752-1804* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1969), Appendix IV. I am grateful to Lance Humphries for sharing this information.



included 15 decanters, 1 dozen Claret glasses, 2 Japanned waiters, 2 corkscrews, cut wine glasses, 1 pair of cut decanters in quart size, 1 dozen cut decanters in pint size, and 1 pair of bottle stands.<sup>234</sup> When “His Excellency the Right Honorable Lord William Campbell” fled Charleston in the beginning of the Revolutionary War, he left behind: 1 very large cut glass decanter in a plate basket, 1 large mahogany sideboard, 1 silver mounted butler, 2 bottle stands, 1 dozen basket bottle stands, 3 five quart decanters, 1 half gallon decanter, 11 quart decanters, 10 pint decanters, 3 quart decanters cut, 3 plain glass salvers, 80 wine glasses of 2 patterns, 1 plate waiter, 3 small plate waiters, 8 plate labels or bottle tickets<sup>235</sup> Lord Botetourt’s inventory of 1770 lists some of the largest number of varied and unusual wine accoutrements: 12 bottle stands, 1 mahogany wine cooler, 28 cut wine glasses, 2 Japanned wine cisterns, 4 silver plate salvers, 1 large silver plate waiter, 18 silver bottle labels, 1 silver plate wine strainer, 5 cut glass wine decanters, 16 plain quart decanters, 6 flowered wine glasses, 35 plain wine glasses, 30 flowered wine glasses, 1 iron cork screw, 1 wine crane, 1 quart and 1 pint wine decanter, 45 wine glasses, 21 glass salvers.<sup>236</sup> Interestingly, in my research, I have only come across the term “crane” twice in inventories, once in that of Lord Botetourt and the other in the 1761 Annapolis inventory of Patrick Creagh which lists “one small pewter bottle crane.”<sup>237</sup> Although the exact function of this piece is still a mystery to scholars, my opinion is that it possibly referred to a type of siphon used to draw the wine out of a bottle when decanting it.

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<sup>234</sup> Richards, "The City Home of Benjamin Chew, Sr., and His Family: A Case Study of the Textures of Life," 61, 84-89.

<sup>235</sup> Hood, *The Governor's Palace in Williamsburg: A Cultural Study*, Appendix 7, 307-313.

<sup>236</sup> Ibid., Appendix 1, 287-295.

<sup>237</sup> Prerogative Court Inventories, Microfilm SR4356-3: 82-89. Maryland State Archives.

In this chapter I have outlined a vast array of objects related to wine consumption. Few gentlemen in the colonies, including those in Annapolis, had this great of an assortment of accoutrements. Royal Governors seemed to have the most extensive amount of objects, probably because they entertained on a higher level than even the wealthiest of individuals such as Edward Lloyd IV. Nevertheless, the actual objects still in existence today that can be traced back to specific Americans, along with the invoices, probate inventories, and other primary sources, are “faithful records” that tell the stories of their time.<sup>238</sup> There was a reason for such quantity and quality of objects, for they were needed to augment the behavior accompanying the consumption of this beverage in order to create the perception of symbolic luxury.

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<sup>238</sup> Carson, "The Consumer Revolution in Colonial America: Why Demand?" 556-57.

## Chapter 4: Architecture and Wine

“All who purchase wine for their own consumption,  
should have a cellar to hold it.”<sup>239</sup>

Surviving architecture and written or visual records discussing or depicting architectural spaces dedicated to the storage of wine should also be viewed as historical evidence indicating the extreme importance of this ritual among the upper class. Similar to the objects used within its walls, the house “became a necessary extension of one’s identity as a gentleman.” Prevalent by the mid-eighteenth century, larger houses took on a more significant role than merely providing shelter, for they were grand arenas used to display one’s place among equals and to buffer oneself from associating with those of a different status.<sup>240</sup>

The ability to dine elegantly at home, alone, or with guests gave a homeowner greater prestige than his ability to drink in public places such as taverns or clubs. Different dynamics occurred within a private home, for it offered a socially charged setting where one was able to create and display an atmosphere of individual wealth, accomplishment, and prestige. Wine storage areas, as well as dining rooms, supplied the framework for these activities that demonstrated one’s social accomplishments.

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<sup>239</sup> Cyrus Redding, *Every Man His Butler* (London: Whittaker & Co., 1839), 62.

<sup>240</sup> Jan K. Gilliam, "The Evolution of the House in Early Virginia," in *The American Home: Material Culture, Domestic Space, and Family Life*, ed. Eleanor McD. Thompson (Winterthur, Delaware: Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum, 1998), 193, 177. See also: Wenger, "The Dining Room in Early Virginia."

The most obvious way that architecture was used to frame the activity of wine connoisseurship and, in turn, the economic and social power of an individual was through the construction of wine cellars. Cyrus Redding, an Englishman who wrote etiquette manuals, stated in his 1839 book, *Every Man His Own Butler*, “all who purchase wine for their own consumption, should have a cellar to hold it, just as one who has taken himself a wife, should get a suitable dwelling for her reception.”<sup>241</sup> A stocked wine cellar proved that the owner could afford more than just a few bottles of choice, imported wine.

### Section 1: Case Study of Annapolis

Although Mark Leone’s description below applies to the gardens of some of the imposing houses in Annapolis, it could be extended to their wine cellars as well: “It was not passive, it was very active, for by walking in it, building it, looking at it, admiring and discussing it, and using it in any way, its contemporaries could take themselves and their position as granted and convince others that the way things are is the way they always had been and should remain.”<sup>242</sup> When these houses of the eighteenth-century Annapolis elite were being constructed, their owners made conscious decisions regarding the types of space they wanted incorporated.

Furthermore, these choices said volumes about the owners’ perception of their place

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<sup>241</sup> Redding, *Every Man His Butler*, 62. Although this book was published in London a bit later than the events discussed in this paper, it was still very pertinent to the eighteenth and early nineteenth century colonists. The author even states in his introduction that the subject “should be applicable in New York or in Sidney as at home” (iv).

<sup>242</sup> Mark P. Leone, “Interpreting Ideology in Historical Archaeology: Using the Rules of Perspective in the William Paca Garden in Annapolis, Maryland,” in *Ideology, Power, and Prehistory*, ed. D Miller and C. Tilley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 34.

in society and about how others viewed them. Given the grandeur of these buildings, it is not surprising that many of the private residences built during this period contain spaces unquestionably used for wine storage. In the following passages, I will describe these wine-related spaces in some of the Annapolis houses and will then supply background information on wine cellars and garrets elsewhere in the colonies.

The Judge John Brice, Jr. House in Annapolis was built as early as 1739 (dendrochronology has been performed on the structure and the wood dates to 1738). One-and-a-half stories with a gambrel roof, it is more modest in its design than the later Annapolis houses; however, it still has many of the same features. Located off the general part of the cellar is a narrow brick room with what once was a dirt floor. Two vents in the interior walls provide ventilation. The room is secured by a door with heavy locking hardware, a necessary feature when protecting an expensive commodity such as imported wine. The presence of two doorways that lead from Brice's basement to the exterior of the building may have made theft a valid concern. John Brice's inventory of May 1, 1767, records 199 quarts of Port and 338 quarts of Madeira in the "cellar." Its value was 53.14 pounds (the enslaved males with the highest value were recorded in his inventory at 50 pounds).<sup>243</sup> Given the quantity and cost of the wine, it is safe to assume that this secure and well-ventilated room was, in fact, where the wine was stored. Brice owned a store next door to the house so it is possible that some of this wine was to be sold; however, it is difficult to verify this without any supporting documentation.

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<sup>243</sup> Prerogative Court Inventories, Volume 97: 180-185. Maryland State Archives.

Begun in 1762, the Upton Scott House is one of the earliest of the large, brick Georgian houses built in Annapolis. Dr. Scott, a native of Ireland, was the personal physician to Governor Horatio Sharpe and an individual active in the local community. In the west corner of the cellar of this elaborate house is a brick, barrel-



Figure 1:  
Upton Scott Cellar

vaulted room presumably used as a wine cellar.<sup>244</sup> The room is slightly below the main floor of the basement and is approached by descending two stairs. The original door has been replaced by a modern variety. A mysterious feature of this vault is an underground tunnel that runs from beneath the floor of the room down to Spa Creek, hundreds of yards away. At this

point, there is no evidence clarifying the purpose of this tunnel. Fairly close to the

entrance of the vaulted space is an exterior door leading to the side of the house. This door still contains its original hardware, which given its size, successfully kept out any individuals attempting to steal the provisions from the wine cellar or the kitchen, which was also located in the basement.



Figure 2:  
Upton Scott Cellar Door

The Ridout House in Annapolis is an example of an eighteenth-century home that was obviously intended for serious entertaining. John Ridout built the elegant brick structure around the time of his marriage to Mary Ogle in 1764. The two-bay dining

<sup>244</sup> As will be discussed later in this chapter, the main purpose for barrel-vaulted rooms in the basements of brick houses was for structural stability. The open space underneath these “barrels” was ideal for storage of provisions that needed to be kept cool.

room is located in the front of the house, facing the street, for all to see as soon as they came into the entrance hall. To place such importance on the dining room, rather than the drawing room, was a mid-eighteenth-century development. Many houses of this time did not even have a specific room dedicated to dining, but details of this front room indicate that the space was intended for just such an activity. In one corner is an original built-in bowfat, consisting of display shelves, a drawer, and an open storage space underneath. The room also has an unusually high chair rail. The extended top of the large sideboard, which is original to the house and just fits over the chair rail, suggests that this eighteenth-century piece was probably custom made for this particular room. Located off the dining room is a small, finished storage area that originally had shelving. This space, which also served as a passageway leading to the drawing room, has paneled doors on either end, making it a discreet serving area during meals.<sup>245</sup>

In the cellar of the Ridout House, two unheated, barrel-vaulted, brick rooms are located under the entrance hall and west wing respectively, close to the basement kitchen. Typical of service basements, the English bond brick in each room, as well as the whole cellar area, is white-washed. Although the doors to each of these rooms are nineteenth-century, it is likely that doors have always existed at their entryways. Large metal hooks hang from the ceiling in one of the spaces, indicating that this room may have been used for food storage, while the other was probably used for wine storage. A nearby doorway to the garden allowed for hogsheads to be rolled directly into the cellar hallway. If they contained wine, they could then be rolled

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<sup>245</sup> Chappell et al., *Architecture in Annapolis: A Field Guide*, 133.

through the large doorway into the vaulted room listed above or they could be rolled through a hinged, horizontal doorway at floor level into the kitchen. Although I was not able to examine the attic space, the current owner confirmed that many empty wine bottles and demijohns were found there. No known inventory exists for John Ridout's property, but given his level of prestige in Annapolis and his obvious interest in entertaining, he surely had a large supply of imported wine and served it to his guests in the most fashionable of objects.

There were several other Annapolis houses that were built in quick succession at this time and all have similar vaulted, brick rooms in their respective cellars. One such example is the Hammond-Harwood House, built between 1774 and 1775 by William



Figure 3:  
Hammond-Harwood Cellar

Buckland for Mathias Hammond. Although numerous vaulted niches were built into the masonry of the chimney supports at Hammond-Harwood, the most likely place for wine storage is the barrel-vaulted room with a herringbone-designed brick floor located under the entrance hall. The dining room in this house is the largest and most ornate room on the first floor, but

unlike the Ridout House, it is located in the back with a view of the garden. Decorated with elaborate wood and plaster ornaments, the Hammond-Harwood dining room was meant for long meals and lengthy after-dinner wine consumption. Hammond mysteriously left Annapolis on the eve of the Revolution and never returned to his elaborate house. The 1828



probate inventory for Jeremiah Townley Chase who lived in Hammond-Harwood as early as 1789 does not mention wine stored in the cellar. However, Chase did own a wide assortment of wine equipage including 3 dozen wine glasses, 12 cut glass decanters, 1 mahogany liquor case, 1 mahogany dumbwaiter, 1 mahogany sideboard (see reference in Chapter 3), and 2 silver waiters.<sup>246</sup>

The Chase-Lloyd House was started in 1769 by Samuel Chase; however, he sold it to Edward Lloyd IV before the building was completed in 1774. Lloyd used this house as his residence when he was in town for business or social reasons, but Wye House in Talbot County was his main dwelling place. The dining room of Chase-Lloyd is the most lavishly decorated of all the rooms, with classical and flower motifs



Figure 4:  
Chase-Lloyd Cellar

abounding in the ornamental plaster and woodwork (again, by the hand of William Buckland). In the cellar, a very large white-washed, barrel-vaulted room runs under the entire length of the entrance hall above. Although constructed as structural support, evidence of enormous hardware on the doorframe indicates that this space was subsequently utilized as storage. Given the room's size, I strongly doubt that only wine was stored here. On the other hand, because Edward Lloyd

IV's Talbot County estate included thousands of bottles of wine, it is not beyond the realm of possibility that much of this space may have been dedicated to wine storage.

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<sup>246</sup> Anne Arundel County Register of Wills, MSA C88-17: 547-554, Maryland State Archives.

Just outside Annapolis stands Whitehall, built in 1765 by Governor Horatio Sharpe near the mouth of the Severn River. After Sharpe returned to England in 1773, he left the house to his secretary, John Ridout. In its cellar are two barrel-vaulted spaces each secured by vented doors. Although legend has it that the space was used as a jail, there is no evidence or reason for this assumption. Perhaps the heavy hardware on the doors led to this theory. However, the hardware makes it even more likely that the space was used for the storage of food stuffs and wine.

The Daniel Dulany House is no longer in existence, since it was located on the current Naval Academy campus and was leveled in the late nineteenth century. This is unfortunate because we know from Dulany's inventory (see Chapters 1 and 3) that a large amount of wine was stored in the "vault and cellars." The term "vault" likely referred to the brick, barrel-vaulted spaces described in the Ridout, Hammond-Harwood, Chase-Lloyd, Scott, and Whitehall houses. What becomes obvious is that the men who were building and living in these houses in Annapolis took full advantage of the structural elements of their homes to further their socially competitive lifestyles.

## Section 2: Background on Wine Storage

Over the course of the eighteenth century the shape of the wine bottle evolved and the special requirements for its storage followed suit. By the third quarter of this century, wine was being stored in cylindrical bottles, whereas earlier vessels tended to be more

short and squat. Because the cylindrical form allowed the bottles to be stacked on their sides in the cellar, those who imported pipes and hogsheads of wine needed a more accommodating space to store the bottles.<sup>247</sup> Acknowledging this growing desire to keep quantities of liquor in one's home, the London bookseller Robert Dodsley began offering *The Cellar-Book, or Butler's Assistant, in keeping a regular Account of his Liquors* in 1760.<sup>248</sup>

None of the houses I examined along the east coast had a definitive wine cellar.<sup>249</sup> However, circumstantial evidence such as inventories, written accounts, drawings, and distinctive architectural details consistently point to specific areas of cellars and attics and the probability that they were used for wine storage. Architectural characteristics needed for an ideal wine cellar included relatively cool temperatures, ventilation (either in the walls or via a latticed or louvered door), and security. Built-in storage units were an additional accessory. These allowed for a cellar to hold the maximum capacity of bottles in an organized fashion.

Although any area of a basement could be used to store wine, brick vaulted spaces, like those in Annapolis, were ideal for providing the stipulations described above. Houses of this period contained arched storage areas in a variety of designs. The smaller vaults provided structural support for a wall or chimney and were built on

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<sup>247</sup> For more information, see Pittman, "Morphological Variability in Late Seventeenth and Early Eighteenth-Century English Wine Bottles."

<sup>248</sup> Hugh Johnson, *Vintage: The Story of Wine* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1989), 304.

<sup>249</sup> The architectural plans for the Decatur house label a room as a wine cellar, but we do not know if Decatur adhered to Latrobe's intentions (see the discussion on this house in Chapter 5).

piers resting on stone footings beneath the cellar floor.<sup>250</sup> A small wine cellar was easily created by placing a locked door at the opening of the vaulted niche. Houses all along the East Coast, from the Means House (1797) in Portland, Maine, to Drayton Hall (c. 1738) near Charleston, South Carolina, contain examples of these smaller, arched structural supports that would have been ideal for wine storage.

Other houses featured larger barrel-vaulted areas that were actual rooms created as



Figure 5:  
Old Wine Cellar

structural support for the entire building. Their size could accommodate the storage of vast quantities of wine, especially if they contained individual bins for better organization (see references to storage bins at Homewood House and Riversdale later in this chapter). This type of organized storage led to the need for an object known as a bin label, usually made of white or cream pottery with black lettering, which denoted the types of wine stored in the unmarked bottles hidden in the depths of these spaces.<sup>251</sup> An early record of such a space actually being called a “vault” occurs in William Byrd’s diary. In Virginia, on April 30, 1709, Bryd wrote: “When the ladies had put their things in order we went into the vault and drank a glass of Rhenish wine and sugar.”<sup>252</sup>

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<sup>250</sup> James L. Garvin, *A Building History of Northern New England* (Hanover: University Press of New England, 2001), 55.

<sup>251</sup> John Salter, ed., *Wine Labels 1730-2003: A Worldwide History* (Suffolk, England: Antique Collectors' Club in association with The Wine Label Circle, 2004), 305.

<sup>252</sup> Quoted in Louis B. Wright and Marion Tinling, ed., *The Secret Diary of William Byrd of Westover 1709-1712* (Richmond: The Dietz Press, 1941), 28.

In addition to cellars, attics or garret spaces were, at times, used for the storage of Madeira in the colonies. Since Madeira matured more favorably in heat, collectors realized that the wine would continue to ripen and age in their own homes. The features of these garret spaces were similar to those of the cellars in terms of a regulated temperature, ventilation, and security. They, too, could be quite elaborate spaces or, at times, were merely glorified closets. A man in South Carolina writing to his son mentions wine storage in a garret: "I send you a pipe of wine for immediate use, 'tis nearly your own age. By importing a pipe every year and storing it in your garrett [sic] you will always have a bottle to offer your friends."<sup>253</sup>

Also in South Carolina, the *City Gazette and Daily Advertiser* listed a property for sale in 1801 on Church Street in Charleston that included a brick carriage house, above which was a "wine-room."<sup>254</sup> Quite a few eighteenth-century houses in the Charleston area had garrets, including a room with a louvered door at the Miles Brewton House, which had the capacity of 1,200 bottles. Still visible on the walls and door is a chalk record of William Alston's Madeira inventory. One inscription reads: "39 dozn bottles of Madeira Wine Drawn off" and another notes that 468 bottles were consumed in 1792.<sup>255</sup>

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<sup>253</sup> Quoted in Rutledge, "After the Cloth Was Removed," 50. This is also an interesting indication that much of the etiquette of wine consumption was passed down from father to son.

<sup>254</sup> Quoted in Carl L. Lounsbury, ed., *An Illustrated Glossary of Early Southern Architecture and Landscape* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1994), 407.

<sup>255</sup> Richard N. Côté, *Mary's World: Love, War, and Family Ties in Nineteenth-Century Charleston* (Mount Pleasant, SC: Corinthian Books, 2001), 38-39. For an image of this, see p. 31. Another house with a well-documented wine garret is the Wickham-Valentine House in Richmond, which will be discussed in Chapter 5.

Interestingly, a garret storage space for Madeira seems to have been solely an American phenomenon. To date, I have not come across any English sources mentioning this type of storage. Additionally, neither English scholar Peter Brown, nor Robin Butler has ever heard of such a practice in England. I must also note that I have not found any evidence of a garret space used for Madeira storage in Annapolis. Since wine was stored in garrets as close as Baltimore and Richmond, it is difficult to fathom that this practice did not occur in Annapolis, especially since the elite gentlemen of this town seemed to participate in the wine consumption ritual at the same level as their fellow countrymen. One explanation may be that undisturbed architectural space in Annapolis is not very prevalent making it difficult for historians to interpret the original fabric of the house. Since the storage of Madeira in garrets was an accepted and somewhat common practice among those who were able to afford an extra supply of this beverage and were knowledgeable of its aging process, perhaps there was no particular reason to mention it in written materials of the time. Nevertheless, these explanations fail to answer why Madeira was not recorded in Annapolis inventories as being located in the attic.<sup>256</sup>

References to both wine cellars and garret spaces can be found in numerous inventories, diaries, and letters elsewhere in the colonies. Below are details of several notable examples. Richard Henry Lee lived at a house called Chantilly in Westmoreland County, Virginia (near Stratford Hall). His 1794 inventory lists wine

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<sup>256</sup> Since many of these gentlemen used their Annapolis house only when they were in town for business or for the social season and spent the rest of the year at their grand country estates, it would be interesting to know if any of these country houses had specialized wine garrets. Perhaps the author will undertake this in future research.

in two locations. First, the store room over the dining room contained 58 gallons of Madeira in various demijohns, 8 dozen bottles of Madeira, 16 bottles partly full of Madeira, 9 3-pint bottles of Madeira and 1 pewter funnel. In his cellar were 12 bottles of vin de Grave, 28 bottles of Port, 61 bottles of Virginia wine, and 2 pipes of Madeira containing 190 gallons.<sup>257</sup>

Charles Drayton, owner of Drayton Hall in South Carolina, made a note in his diary that he “took from the cellar one large case bottle of Madeira.”<sup>258</sup> Begun in 1738, Drayton Hall does not have a below-ground cellar since the water table is too high in this area for the construction of basements.

Instead the ground floor is used as a large storage area.

Located in the long hallway of this floor are six niches built

into the white-washed brick foundation walls (two are built into the masonry of the chimneys). Four of these niches were

made into closets with wooded scalloped-edged shelves. Ghost marks indicate that doors with heavy hardware were used to secure the contents of these closets. One can assume that some of the valuable contents may have been wine.



Figure 6:  
Drayton Hall Cellar

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<sup>257</sup> Document owned by Stratford Hall. I am grateful to Judy Hynson at Stratford Hall for her assistance with this research. The mention of Virginia wine in Lee’s inventory is noteworthy. Assuming that it was locally made wine, it proves that some early vineyards were successful, if even for a short time. The pipes of Madeira in the cellar indicate that the Madeira was stored in a garret only after it had been decanted into smaller storage containers. Richard Henry Lee was the sixth President of the United States in Congress assembled under the Articles of Confederation. Chantilly was destroyed by a fire.

<sup>258</sup> Charles Drayton Diary, 1785-1820. Owned by Drayton Hall, South Carolina. See other references to this diary throughout this paper. I am grateful to Tim Chesser at Drayton Hall for sharing this reference and for giving me a tour of the house.



Figure 7:  
Drayton Hall Upstairs Closet

Also of interest, is a very unusual closet on the second floor in the drawing room, next to the ballroom of Drayton Hall. Behind the closet doorway is a crude plaster wall, into which is carved a deep, narrow storage space, lined with shelves. Although the exact purpose for this closet is unknown, the locked door and the relatively cool temperature inside suggest the possibility that wine was stored there for easy access during social occasions.

Stratford Hall, the brick Georgian house built in Virginia by Thomas Lee between 1730 and 1738, has four long, barrel-vaulted brick cellars with short doorways sealing them off from the general cellar. These are similar to the barrel-vaulted rooms in the Annapolis houses but much narrower and harder to access. Philip Ludwell Lee's inventory of 1776 lists wine in the "cellar," making it almost certain that at least one of these vaults was used for wine storage. Additional wine is listed in the inventory as being in the "wet room," the hyphen area on the ground floor connecting the east and west wings. Matilda and "Light Horse Harry" Lee who lived in Stratford Hall, ordered an impressive amount of French wine in 1785: 200 bottles of old Medoc, 36 bottles of Chateau Margaux, and 72 bottles of Grave wine (white wine). These had to have been stored in a secure and somewhat temperature-controlled part of the house, namely the vaulted cellar.<sup>259</sup>

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<sup>259</sup> Location of the original order is unknown. Transcript copy at Stratford Hall. I am grateful to Judy Hynson at Stratford Hall for the tour and for access to the inventories and transcripts of relevant papers. Due to the difficulty in navigating the cellars, these areas are not on view to the public, but an



Sabine Hall in Virginia has fascinating supporting evidence that a brick vaulted cellar was used for wine storage. Built circa 1738 by Landon Carter, the fourth son of Robert “King” Carter, the house is a classic brick Georgian structure with an elaborate underground basement. Still located in a large vaulted, white-washed room (similar in size to the ones in Annapolis) is a marble cask caddie. Undoubtedly made by the same stone masons who constructed the house, the caddie has a thick, grooved piece of curved marble as the barrel support and three wide, low legs as the base. Its weight alone is probably the rationale for its survival in its original location.<sup>260</sup>

Landon Carter’s diary contains further evidence of wine being stored in the basement of Sabine Hall. While discussing his son’s behavior with regard to drinking, Carter mentions the wine being “brought up,” as well as having keys to secure the wine.

Also mentioned in his diary are the types of wine he ordered for the house, including Claret and Mountain.<sup>261</sup> The 1779 inventory of his estate included 66 wine glasses – an enormous amount even to us today.<sup>262</sup>

Thomas Jefferson designed an elaborate and ingenious architectural feature that was dedicated to aiding his wine consumption at Monticello. Mechanical dumbwaiters were installed on either side of the dining room fireplace, which could be lowered

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image of one of the small vaulted rooms at Stratford Hall can be seen on the Historic American Buildings Survey website ([http://lcweb2.loc.gov/ammems/collections/habs\\_haer/](http://lcweb2.loc.gov/ammems/collections/habs_haer/)).

<sup>260</sup> I am grateful to Ralph Harvard for informing me of this piece and to the present owner for showing it to me.

<sup>261</sup> Greene, ed., *The Diary of Colonel Landon Carter of Sabine Hall, 1752-1778*, vol. II, 1009-1010, 671, 737. For the full quotation regarding the cellar and the keys, see Chapter 2.

<sup>262</sup> Berger, ““Pray Let Them Be Neat and Fashionable or Send None:” Dining in Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century America, an Exploration of Ritual and Equipage with a Case Study of Virginia Probate Records,” 160.

through the ceiling of the brick cellar below, where a servant would replenish the wine supply. When not in use, the dumbwaiters were concealed behind paneled doors in the mantelpiece. Although Monticello was begun in 1769, the dining room area of the house was not completed and used until 1772. Jefferson was known for his love of wine and these pieces of “equipage” must have been admired by all of the wine-consuming contemporaries he had to dinner.

William Hamilton’s home in Philadelphia, The Woodlands, is a testament to the luxuries a bachelor gentleman could afford. Constructed circa 1770 and reconstructed in a more neoclassical style between 1786 and 1789, it has an exceptional survival of



what more than likely was a wine storage area.

Portrayed in 1797 as “interested only in his house, his hothouse, and his Madeira,”<sup>263</sup> Hamilton must have devoted some of the storage spaces in The

Figure 8:  
The Woodlands Cellar

Woodlands to his prize wines. Located in the elaborate basement of The Woodlands is a room separated from

<sup>263</sup> Metchie J.E. Budka, ed., *Under Their Vine and Fig Tree: Travels through America in 1797-1799, 1805 with Some Further Account of Life in New Jersey* (Elizabeth, NJ: Grassmann Publishing Company, 1965), 53. Quoted in Jamie Jacobs, "Historic American Buildings Survey: Addendum to the Woodlands," (The National Park Service, 2002), 45. I am grateful to Jamie Jacobs at the National Park Service (Historic American Buildings Survey) for assisting me with information on this site. See a reference to Hamilton’s all-male dinner parties in Chapter 2.

the rest of the basement by a curved, wooden wall consisting of paneling on the lower half and open, round spindles, allowing for ventilation and easy visibility inside, on the upper half. A locked door gives access into the space. There is no specific documentation or evidence inside the room to confirm that this area was used for wine storage; however, it is likely given the suitability of the space for that purpose. A photograph of the circa 1804 Israel Huckins tavern in New Hampshire shows a similar room used for the storage of liquor,<sup>264</sup> and a photograph of the space in The Woodlands, taken in the 1930s, identifies it as a wine cellar. At that time, there were more original artifacts in the house, some of which may have indicated that wine was stored in this space. There are other closets in the vast and elaborate basement, which, too, could have been used for wine storage, but, given Hamilton's passion for Madeira, few of them were probably large enough to hold the quantity he would have had on hand. Although there are also two attic spaces in the house, I was unable to view these and cannot say whether there is any likelihood they were used for wine storage. Hamilton was known to be an Anglophile, and the architecture of The Woodlands was significantly altered after his travels to England. Because the English either did not know of or approve of the American practice of storing Madeira in an attic space, Hamilton would probably not have followed this practice.

Houses in New England also used designated wine cellars. In 1823, Joseph Anthony of New Bedford, Massachusetts makes note of his wine cellar in his diary: "Devoted the day to bottling port wine...filled 300 bottles and stowed them in the wine

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<sup>264</sup> For the image, see Donna-Belle Garvin, *On the Road North of Boston: New Hampshire Taverns and Turnpikes, 1700-1900* (Hanover: University Press of New England, 2003), 25.

cellar.”<sup>265</sup> The Shirley-Eustis House in Roxbury was built during the period of 1747 to 1751 by William Shirley, appointed Royal Governor of Massachusetts Bay Colony and Commander-in-Chief of all British forces in North America by George II. The House is one of only four remaining Royal Colonial Governors' mansions in the country and the only one actually built for a Royal Colonial Governor. Located in the Historic New England collection is a drawing, which illustrates a wine cellar in the basement of the Shirley-Eustis House. The image was executed from the memory of Mrs. Blaisdell, the housekeeper working there during the William and Caroline Eustis residency (1819 to 1865) and shows that a separate wine cellar was located between a cellar for vegetables and one for general supplies.<sup>266</sup>

Riversdale, the house built by Henri Joseph Stier in Prince George's County, Maryland in the eighteenth century and completed by Stier's daughter, Rosalie, and her husband George Calvert in 1807, has a remarkable wine cellar. Behind a large door with open slats is a barrel-vaulted space, within which is a smaller vaulted space made up of individual masonry bins for storing different types of wine. Rosalie Calvert provides one notable exception of a woman in America ordering and recording the contents of the cellar. In two letters to her sister, Isabelle van Havre, Rosalie bemoans the fact that she is in charge of all household activities, including ones for which her husband should have been responsible. When providing a list of such duties, she mentions wine as the first item in both letters: “my husband [George

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<sup>265</sup> Quoted in Sandra Oliver, "Joy of Historical Cooking: Cups of Cheer," *Food History News* 54 14, no. 2 (2002): 3. I am grateful to Kathleen O'Connor at Bayou Bend for sharing this reference.

<sup>266</sup> I am grateful to both Andrea Taaffe at the Shirley-Eustis House and the staff of Historic New England for sharing this information.

Calvert] does absolutely nothing other than manage his lands. The wines, the provisions, the servants' work, horses, carriages, garden, dairy – I am in charge of all that.”<sup>267</sup>

The architectural drawings for Benjamin Henry Latrobe's 1818 plans of the Stephen Decatur house in Washington, DC are located in the Library of Congress, and while they are a bit later in date than the focus of this paper, they are highly pertinent to this discussion. Designated basement spaces are included in the drawings, including one labeled “Vaulted Wine Cellar,” which is a large space in the eastern axial of the house. There is also a garret space above the third floor. Although this area is not labeled in the drawings and there is no concrete evidence that Madeira was stored there, the photographs taken of the Decatur garret prior to its demolition show a door with open lattice work very similar to other garret spaces where Madeira was known to be stored. The sale of Steven Decatur's property in 1820 included many wine-related pieces of equipage, signifying that the house probably hosted elaborate evening celebrations geared towards imported wine consumption. Along with furniture related to dining, smaller accoutrements listed in sale included: 83 wine glasses, 20 claret glasses, 7 pairs of decanters, 1 pair of pint decanters, 4 small waiters, 6 large waiters, and 2 coasters.<sup>268</sup>

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<sup>267</sup> Margaret Law Callcott, ed., *Mistress of Riversdale: The Plantation Letters of Rosalie Stier Calvert, 1795-1821* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991), 351. Despite this reference, the museum label for this space is entitled “George Calvert's Wine Cellar.”

<sup>268</sup> Helen Duprey Bullock, ed., *Decatur House* (Washington, D.C.: National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1967), Appendices. I am grateful to Katherine Malone-France for assisting me with this information. Images of the Decatur House attic can be seen on the Historic American Buildings Survey website ([http://lcweb2.loc.gov/ammem/collections/habs\\_haer/](http://lcweb2.loc.gov/ammem/collections/habs_haer/)).

As indicated in architectural drawings and other written materials, every foot of physical space inside an eighteenth or early nineteenth-century home was valued on many different levels. These structures had to accommodate several aspects of daily life: both the private and public life of the family in the household, as well as the life of the servants who were working and, at times, sleeping there. "Space is permeated with social relations,"<sup>269</sup> and how the distinct areas of the house were divided and used said much about its owner. The housing of wine affected space within domestic architecture more significantly than any other consumable product in the eighteenth century. Considering that whole rooms were dedicated exclusively to its storage, one begins to understand the social importance placed upon this particular beverage. If an individual could afford to allocate precious space in his home to such a luxury as imported wine, he was certainly living a life well beyond that of the average citizen.

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<sup>269</sup> Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991), 286. Quoted in Dolores Hayden, "Urban Landscape History: The Sense of Place and the Politics of Space," in *Understanding Ordinary Landscapes*, ed. Paul Groth and Todd W. Bressi (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997), 132.

## Chapter 5: Interpretation of Wine Consumption in Historic House Museums

Consuming imported wine was one of the most complex and sophisticated rituals of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, but one can only get a true sense of its magnitude when considering all the elements of the evidentiary body in its entirety. While diaries discussing social occasions survive, as do examples of the equipage, and sometimes, albeit rarely, the wine itself, it is critical that the actual physical places in which the wine was stored and handled be preserved as well. In the following chapter, I will discuss how the importance of this ritual might be better conveyed to the public within the context of various historic house museums.

Since the 1850s, with Ann Pamela Cunningham's successful incorporation of the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association of the Union and the opening of Hasbrouck House in Newburgh, New York, as the first house preserved by a state government, historic house museums have been a part of the American landscape. William Sumner Appleton continued this tradition by founding the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities in 1910. Later, the Historic Sites Act of 1935 "brought the federal government and the National Park Service into the field when that legislation declared it 'a national policy to preserve for historic use historic sites, buildings, and

objects of national significance for the inspiration and benefit of the people of the United States.”<sup>270</sup>

With this in mind, I thought it useful to examine the extent to which the story of wine-bibbing, and all of its relevant factors, is incorporated into the interpretive programs of historic house museums from Maine to South Carolina. In visiting these sites, I posed the following questions to determine what is currently being achieved and what more can be done: First, are all of the areas of the buildings relevant to the wine story available to the public? Second, is the ritual mentioned in tours? And third, how can this activity be better presented to the public?

It is widely accepted that the historic environment provides a valuable learning experience. By presenting history within an accurate setting, we take words off a page, put them in a context, and bring them to life. It is much easier to tell the story of wine consumption within the walls that framed this activity and with the objects that gave it a visible and undeniable importance. In *Material Culture History: The Scholarship Nobody Knows*, Cary Carson observes that “the history of material life presents its own important account of people’s increasing dependence on inanimate objects to communicate and mediate their relationships with one another and to guide their daily progress through the social worlds they inhabit.”<sup>271</sup> What better way to

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<sup>270</sup> Edward P. Alexander, "Historical Prologue: The Rise of American History Museums," in *Leadership for the Future: Changing Directorial Roles in American History Museums and Historical Societies*, ed. Bryant F. Tolles Jr. (Nashville: American Association for State and Local History, 1991), 11-13.

<sup>271</sup> Cary Carson, "Material Culture History: The Scholarship Nobody Knows," in *American Material Culture: The Shape of the Field*, ed. Ann Smart Martin and J. Ritchie Garrison (Knoxville:



demonstrate the role that wine consumption played in a man's quest for social prestige than to show where it happened and how it occurred? Furthermore, in advocating for the preservation (at a basic level) and interpretation (at a higher level) of a basement or an attic, we move well beyond the topic of wine consumption. These areas of the house are fundamental to the comprehension and appreciation of a building's physical fabric.

Nevertheless, I concluded that relatively few historic house museums are highlighting the importance of the wine ritual, and virtually none of them are utilizing all of the architectural resources they have. Though dining rooms served as the center stage for the extravagant evenings where large quantities of imported wine were consumed, the wine cellars and garret spaces were also vital to the refined image the gentleman of the house was attempting to portray. Peter Ward wrote in *A History of Domestic Space* "we choose, build, or alter our dwellings in order to meet some of our needs beyond the basic one of shelter...In a sense the home is the theatre of our domestic experience, the stage on which we enact much of the long drama of our lives."<sup>272</sup> But we can only understand this drama if all of the stage, both front and back, is visible.

### Section 1: Case Study of Annapolis

Little of the wine consumption story is currently being presented to the public in the historic house museums of Annapolis. Of the grand, eighteenth-century houses, only

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Distributed by University of Tennessee Press for Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum, 1997), 415.

<sup>272</sup> Peter Ward, *A History of Domestic Space: Privacy and the Canadian Home* (Vancouver: UMB Press, 1999), 3. Chapter 1 of this book is relevant to this subject.

the William Paca House and the Hammond-Harwood House are open to visitors, and due to lack of various resources, neither of them routinely interprets the ritual of wine consumption. William Paca constructed his elaborate, five-part Georgian house after his marriage to Mary Chew in 1763. He then sold the house in 1780, after which it changed hands many times over. In 1901 a developer acquired the dwelling and incorporated it into Carvel Hall Hotel, a resort built over Paca's gardens in the back of the house.<sup>273</sup> The interior of this building had been significantly altered well before the Historic Annapolis Foundation (HAF) purchased it in the late 1960s; however, the organization further altered the original fabric of the house.

Originally, the wine cellar located in the east hyphen was a masonry enclosure with plaster walls. Access to the room was through a trap door from the room above or a door on the garden side of the hyphen that could only be opened from the inside. Ghost marks from shelving were visible on the walls. HAF removed most of the existing Paca wine cellar in order to accommodate the building's mechanical systems. Reportedly, the room was documented before it was destroyed; however, I have yet to locate any photographs of the space. Thorough recording of an existing structure should always be standard protocol for any historic organization before evidence is destroyed. In addition to answering questions in the future regarding the physical construction of the building, the photographs and supporting documentation could assist with a related exhibition or a recreation of the space. Any materials removed from the site, such as hardware and shelving, should also be saved for future examination and possible display.

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<sup>273</sup> Chappell et al., *Architecture in Annapolis: A Field Guide*, 114.

The Hammond-Harwood House has a brick, barrel-vaulted room in the cellar which is still extant but not on view to the public. It is located around the corner from the central, front room of the basement, where meetings and lectures are currently held. The vaulted room now serves as an office and research room. However, considering the many varied activities that occurred on a daily basis in these cellars and the important role wine consumption played in the lives of the gentlemen of Annapolis, the curators of Hammond-Harwood House have an ideal opportunity to present the stories associated with this vaulted space, especially since it is one of the few historic sites where the public already has access to the cellar.

## Section 2: Interpretation at Other Sites

Various historic house museums do currently interpret the story of wine consumption at some level. Two in particular have recently undergone restorations following extensive scholarly research that was performed both before and during the work.



Figure 9:  
Wickham-Valentine Cellar

First, the Wickham-Valentine House in Richmond, which was built in 1812, accurately interprets a vaulted room in the basement as a wine storage area. Barrels, demijohns, and wine bottles are displayed throughout the space and an interpretive panel is attached to the security railing. What is

not on display, however, is an astounding wine closet located on the third floor. The room, with plastered walls and possibly only one coat of paint, has long, wooden shelves on either side. The entry door contains evidence of a large lockbox, and the other end has a small opening with metal bars which looks into a skylit space under the eaves. The closet appears to be original to the house; an inventory from 1839 lists over 600 bottles of Madeira and various ports stored there.<sup>274</sup> Unfortunately, it would be physically difficult for visitors to view this area of the house. However, a display addressing the topic of Madeira storage could be arranged near or in the wine cellar. This interpretive area would have professional photographs of the garret and a copy of the 1839 inventory.



Figure 10:  
Wickham-Valentine Garret



Figure 11:  
Octagon House Cellar

Another house representing part of the imported wine story is the Octagon House in Washington, DC. Built in 1800, it has a unit of six brick and stucco vaulted bins (3 over 3) in its cellar. Barrels are displayed in these bins, and, on the wall, is a label entitled “What type of goods were stored here?” It goes on to explain that the Tayloes kept wine in this small curved area and that the space would have originally had a locked door to prevent theft. This label is more descriptive than those

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<sup>274</sup> I am grateful to Ken Myers for giving me a tour of the house and sharing the inventory.

in other parts of the building since visitors here are on a self-guided tour rather than a docent-led tour which occurs elsewhere in the house. A storage space in the attic with a locked, lattice-covered door may have been where Madeira was stored in the Octagon but not prior to 1814 when a hipped roof was added to the house and the space was thereby created. Currently, this location is closed to the public and used for storage. On the general tour of the house, docents could continue the wine story, started by the displays in the basement, by highlighting Tayloe-owned wine-related objects in the dining room and then mentioning the possible Madeira storage in the attic.

All too often in museum settings, only formal rooms are open to the public. Even in secondary sources about historic houses, discussions or illustrations of spaces other than the main rooms are rare. Yet, this approach tells only half the story. These buildings were working houses where people of different backgrounds had to coexist on a daily basis. Since wine was stored or consumed on practically every floor and various individuals were responsible for its care and handling, this subject matter provides a perfect opportunity to broaden the understanding of the material elements of the structure as well as the relationships within the household. Wine storage areas are especially relevant because the owner of the home may have worked more closely with his servants in these spaces than in other parts of the building. In the past, historic house museums often shied away from politically charged topics such as the role of slaves and servants and their relationships with their masters.<sup>275</sup> However, this

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<sup>275</sup> For more on this topic, see Patricia West, *Domesticating History: The Political Origins of America's House Museums* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian, 1999).

has changed in recent years and many museums are now focusing on the stories of the workers who were employed (voluntarily or involuntarily) at these sites. In doing so, curators can now address all of the topics related to the wine-bibbing ritual.

When hogsheads and pipes full of wine arrived at these houses, the wine needed to be decanted, which involved pouring it into dozens or even hundreds of bottles. These bottles then required frequent rotation to prevent the corks from drying out and the wine from being compromised. Because imported wine was an expensive yet essential element in a gentleman's bid for elite status, he relied upon a few trusted servants to assist him with its care. This was a large responsibility for the workers and not one performed within the most comfortable of environments since they were carrying out their tasks in either damp basements or hot attics. Charles Drayton of South Carolina mentioned in an 1801 diary notation that he and his Butler "drew off my wine from the cases, into bottles."<sup>276</sup> One wonders what type of conversation occurred between these two men during the many hours it took them to perform this chore.

If a house museum was so inclined, the story of wine-bibbing could be told in numerous ways depending upon the resources of the site. Ideally, all of the wine-related areas of the house would be opened and restored to their original appearance. Physical access is not enough, however, especially since some of the spaces were

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<sup>276</sup> Charles Drayton Diary, 1785-1820. I am grateful to Tim Chesser at Drayton Hall for sharing notations from the diary.

used for activities that are quite foreign to us today. For this reason, the use of labels and didactic panels is necessary to further explain the ritual.

In cases where permanently opening the storage areas for display is not feasible, there are alternatives that would accomplish a similar objective. Museum staff could create a small exhibition highlighting the topic and have the theme carried throughout the house for a limited amount of time. A themed tour could also be held as a special ticketed event to raise money for the site. Both of these would require minimal and temporary access and interpretation of the storage areas. At this time, photographs could be taken for informational brochures and a video could be made that would provide images for times when the spaces are closed. Demonstrations of activities such as decanting could also be performed or recorded for the video. At the very least, docents need to be trained to provide more information on the importance of this ritual during general tours. Sherry Butcher-Youngmans in her book, *Historic House Museums: A Practical Handbook for their Care, Preservation, and Management*, states that “interpretation is an attempt to stimulate the senses and arouse the imagination.”<sup>277</sup> In order to do this, a museum staff would need to be creative in their approach of interpretation.

Homewood House, built in 1801 in Baltimore, Maryland, is a site where little original fabric has been altered and where the opportunity for interpretation of the wine-drinking ritual is promising. The dining room, which is always arranged for public

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<sup>277</sup> Sherry Butcher-Youngmans, *Historic House Museums: A Practical Handbook for Their Care, Preservation, and Management* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 182. Of particular interest are chapter 1 and 10.

display, could be set as it would have been just after the main meal, when the tablecloth has been removed and wine and dessert were being served. Below the

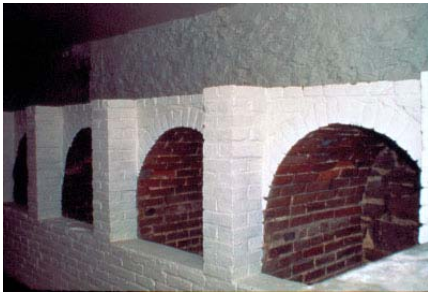


Figure 12:  
Homewood House Cellar

central hall, a largely intact wine cellar survives in the basement, complete with a herringbone brick floor and individual vaulted masonry bins which could be regulated to different temperatures, depending upon the type of wine stored there.<sup>278</sup>

The only modern intrusion is a furnace installed in a small area of the room where two additional storage bins were originally located. At the present time, this space is not being interpreted, as it is the only area in the house large enough to accommodate public receptions. Nevertheless, the museum staff is currently working on a grant application to study the wine cellar with the goal of eventually restoring it for public display.



Figure 13:  
Homewood House Garret

Upstairs in Homewood House is a garret where Madeira was likely stored in demijohns. Since Americans believed that this particular wine aged better in heat, a small space under the



Figure 14:  
Homewood House Garret

<sup>278</sup> Many of the barrel-vaulted rooms in Annapolis are also located under the central hallway. However, the room at Homewood is not barrel-vaulted. The individual bins are somewhat similar to those at Octagon House, yet the ones at Homewood are larger and greater in number. Charles Carroll of Homewood's son, Charles Carroll of Doughoregan mentions in his records of November 1835 that he "packed in the cellar 40 doz. London Particular Ma. House of Newton Gordon Murdoch Duff & Co.- Imported 1832 Bottled June 1835." (Transcribed in Catherine Rogers Arthur and Cindy Kelly, *Homewood House* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004), Appendix B.



eaves with a window was ideal for its storage. The garret at Homewood is located below the roof within the pediment of the portico. The space is approached by opening a locked iron grate at waist level in an anteroom off the second floor hallway. It is lighted (and warmed) by a decorative window in the pediment. Madeira was the most expensive item in Carroll's 1825 inventory, totaling 500 dollars; however, the appraisers did not make note of where it was stored in the house.<sup>279</sup> Currently, this small room is used as storage for the offices surrounding it. Rarely are stairs leading to Madeira storage areas very accessible in historic houses; however the one at Homewood is approached via the main staircase to the second floor, making interpretation of this space slightly more realistic, especially for small groups who are able to climb steep stairs. Ironically, because the original occupant of the house, Charles Carroll of Homewood, died of alcoholism, this site offers a unique opportunity to educate the public about this debilitating disease which plagued past generations as well.<sup>280</sup> The staff acknowledges the important role that wine played at this site, and they continually incorporate more information into their tours. Until they restore the cellar, it would take minimal resources to temporarily arrange the two storage spaces in a way that documents their original use and then photograph these installations. The subsequent photographic display could then provide visitors with images of a type of wine storage few of us are familiar with today.

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<sup>279</sup> Transcribed in *Ibid.*, Appendix A. Refer to this source for additional general information on Homewood House and photographs of the site, including the cellar and the garret.

<sup>280</sup> Rosalie Calvert wrote to her father on June, 10, 1814: "Charles Carroll has become a "Sot"-he is drunk from morning to evening." (Callcott, ed., *Mistress of Riversdale: The Plantation Letters of Rosalie Stier Calvert, 1795-1821*, 267.)

Likewise, the 1837 Henry Wadsworth Longfellow House in Cambridge, Massachusetts has the potential to integrate aspects of the wine-drinking ritual into its public displays. This house has several brick, barrel-vaulted rooms in its basement, and records indicate that at least one of them was used for the storage of wine. These rooms are similar to the barrel-vaulted spaces in Annapolis, including the presence of a small vent at the apex of the vault. Due to space restrictions in the house, these areas are presently used for object storage, but their overall fabric has not been altered. This survival of original material lends an opportunity to restore the rooms to their earlier appearance. Integral to the interpretation would be wine-related objects already in the museum's collection that are associated with Longfellow's occupancy. These include *The History of Ancient and Modern Wines*, published in 1824 in London and archaeological fragments of wine bottles discovered during a dig in the cellar. On May 12, 1837, Longfellow wrote to his father "The wine is bottled, and turns out to be of the very best quality. The Hock-drinkers in Boston think they never tasted any equal to it. I shall send you by Monday's boat a basket of it, in small bottles."<sup>281</sup> If permanently opening the basement to the public is not a possibility, the space could be temporarily cleared and documented. The ensuing photography could then be incorporated into tours and displays on the main floor.



Figure 15:  
Longfellow Cellar

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<sup>281</sup> Samuel Longfellow, ed., *Life of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, with Extracts from His Journals and Correspondence*, 3 vols., vol. 2 (New York: Greenwood Press, 1969 reprint), 24. I am grateful to Anita Israel at the Longfellow National Historic Site for sharing this reference.



Figure 16:  
Stenton Cellar

Similarly, Stenton in Philadelphia, which was built by James Logan between 1723 and 1730, contains a remarkable survival of wine storage areas and accessories. Inside a large brick-vaulted room in the basement is a long, wooden cask caddy which held barrels of wine off the floor. Near this is a locked closet which still contains wooden shelves with



Figure 17:  
Stenton Closet

cutouts designed to accommodate wine bottles. According to Bill Pittman's thesis on English wine bottles, the glass bottles would have been inverted in the wooden holders so that the corks would remain moist. This practice of binning bottles in frames occurred in England by the end of the seventeenth century.<sup>282</sup> It is unclear whether the shelves in the Paca House cellar might have contained similar wooden holders. The basement of Stenton has a dirt floor and is located down a narrow set of stairs so it would need significant alterations in order to be opened to the public. Since original fabric would be destroyed in order to do this, a better alternative might be to offer a wine-themed tour or an overall cellar tour as a special, fundraising event. The architectural features of Stenton's basement are unusual enough to warrant a photographic brochure on the hidden spaces in the house and the functions that occurred in these underground spaces.

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<sup>282</sup> Pittman, "Morphological Variability in Late Seventeenth and Early Eighteenth-Century English Wine Bottles," 60.

In Richmond, the John Marshall House has some interesting examples of wine storage facilities as well. Marshall, who was a Supreme Court Justice, was known for his love of Madeira and every Sunday he had all-male dinner parties at his house in Richmond to discuss law and to drink Madeira. Professionally, Marshall disagreed with the regulation that Supreme Court Justices could only drink wine during wet weather when it would assist them in staying healthy. While Marshall was the Chief Justice, he permitted wine consumption on a daily basis, saying: “Our jurisdiction extends over so large a territory that the doctrine of chances makes it certain that it must be raining somewhere.”<sup>283</sup> In fact, some of the best Madeira was marked “The Supreme Court” because it was imported directly for the Court, and the justices would sip it as they discussed the day’s cases after the cloth had been removed at dinner.<sup>284</sup>

Marshall’s 1790 brick house still contains evidence of



Figure 18:  
John Marshall Cellar

where this wine  
connoisseur stored his  
favorite beverage. In what  
was then the basement

kitchen and is now the gift shop  
are two brick, barrel-vaulted



Figure 19:  
John Marshall Cellar

<sup>283</sup> Quoted in Josiah Quincy, *Figures of the Past from the Leaves of Old Journals* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1926), 189-190. I am grateful to Charles Hobson for assisting with this reference.

<sup>284</sup> Eric Burns, *The Spirits of America: A Social History of Alcohol* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2004), 28. There must have been a dining room at the Supreme Court where these dinners took place; however, the story is relevant because it attests to Marshall’s admiration for Madeira.

storage rooms. Each has a slightly raised floor along with its original door with four small ventilation holes and evidence of a very secure locking mechanism. It is rare for these spaces to contain their original doors, much less such interesting ones, so at the very least, a didactic panel describing the function of the rooms could be placed in the shop. One of these vaults was most likely used for food storage, but from his papers, it appears that one was used for the storage of wine. Currently, they both contain shop materials, but since the cellar is large and easily accessible, they could, instead, be part of the overall information being presented to the public at this site.<sup>285</sup>

Obviously, there is a limited amount of information that can be conveyed at any one particular site due to space restrictions and the challenge of physically getting the visitors to the cellars and attics in a safe and efficient manner. However, if historic house museums are going to continue to be a viable tool in educating the public on the country's cultural history, the staff must constantly reevaluate and expand interpretation of these sites. One of the many concerns for any museum staff is fostering visitation. Directors and curators are continually thinking of new types of interpretation that will entice a repeat visitor. Not only would opening up additional areas of the house give a more balanced approach to the social history being preserved and presented to the viewing public, but focusing on an activity such as wine consumption, would attract individuals specifically interested in the topic, as well as regular patrons who are curious about previously unopened areas of the museum. Some organizations have found that featuring seminars is yet another way

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<sup>285</sup> I am grateful to Patricia Archer for giving me a tour of the Marshall house and for sharing this information.

to build traffic, and this technique could be more widely applied. Every spring for the past ten years Homewood House has sponsored “An Evening of Traditional Beverages,” which is an innovative way of discussing wine consumption by focusing on a single type of liquor that Charles Carroll possibly had in his house. This has been an extremely successful event for the site and draws a large crowd every year.

A building is not just a stagnant object, yet its role in society can only be understood through its use. As William Alderson and Shirley Low noted in their book on the subject of interpretation, “we do not meet that obligation just by saving and restoring a historic site. Only when the essential meaning of a site and of the people and events associated with it is communicated to the visitor can we truly say that we have met our responsibilities.”<sup>286</sup> More recently, Patricia West acknowledges in her book *Domesticating History* “we now see the proper function of a museum as the presentation of historically accurate interpretations of the American past... We not only have the right but the responsibility to revise [the missions of historic houses] to accommodate new scholarship, new communities, and new agendas.”<sup>287</sup> Daily activities, such as an all-male dinner party or the ongoing care of the provisions in a wine cellar, can not only stimulate a visitor’s imagination but can also expand her understanding of the past when viewed within the context in which it occurred.

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<sup>286</sup> William T. Alderson and Shirley Payne Low, *Interpretation of Historic Sites*, 2nd ed. (Nashville: American Association for State and Local History, 1985), 7.

<sup>287</sup> West, *Domesticating History: The Political Origins of America's House Museums*, 162.

## Summary

Today, wine, with its low alcohol content, is more widely consumed than other, more potent alcoholic drinks. In the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, however, it was only consumed by the small group who could afford it and its accoutrements.

Good quality American wines did not exist, and respectable wines from foreign ports had high importation costs. Furthermore, why would anyone dare to serve expensive wine in low-quality equipage? One extravagance led to the other, and as with any luxurious product, inventories reveal that both wine cellars full of exotic wines and lavish objects associated with wine were prevalent not among the working majority but solely among the wealthy minorities. According to Lois Carr and Lorena Walsh, “over the first quarter of the eighteenth century change accelerated in the households of the rich and powerful. They began to acquire a greater array of material goods that permitted a style of living truly different from that of more ordinary people.”<sup>288</sup>

The affluent gentleman in early America had both the funds and the time to dedicate to leisurely pursuits such as wine consumption. Reflecting on the times, diarist James Boswell observed in 1775 that “Drinking is in reality an occupation which employs a considerable portion of the time of many people; and to conduct it in the most rational and agreeable manner is one of the great arts of living.”<sup>289</sup> It was a way for them to support their self-proclaimed status of gentility. As the well-known scholar, Thorstein

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<sup>288</sup> Carr and Walsh, “Changing Lifestyles and Consumer Behavior in the Colonial Chesapeake,” 66.

<sup>289</sup> Quoted in Peter Brown and Marla Schwartz, *Come Drink the Bowl Dry: Alcoholic Liquors and Their Place in 18th Century Society* (York, England: York Civic Trust for Fairfax House, 1996), 4. I am grateful to Mark Letzer for sharing this article.

Veblen emphasized in his legendary book, *The Theory of the Leisure Class*:

“Conspicuous consumption of valuable goods was a means of reputability to the gentleman of leisure.”<sup>290</sup>

Why did the upper-class gentlemen of Annapolis and other cities use imported wine to help label themselves as genteel or refined? In other words, why did the ritual involving this beverage act as such a significant activity in which they could participate? Wine bibbing had financial, political, and social implications. It produced the widest array of luxurious accoutrements dedicated to one pursuit, and it required a special use of physical space within a household. Participation in the ritual indicated that one had the requisite knowledge of how to buy, care for, and consume certain varieties of wine. Furthermore, the desire for these wines helped to establish a political platform for colonists to work towards their independence. Individuals of this time period understood the implications of their ability to partake in this ritual. Wine, the cultural object, and all the other cultural objects associated with its consumption could demonstrate the owner’s power and place within a social hierarchy; it was a form of communication.<sup>291</sup> The power of this beverage was that it exuded power.

Still, much more needs to be explored with regard to this topic. The information on Annapolis consumption habits was surprisingly and disappointingly scant. There proved to be fewer written records and surviving architectural evidence than I had

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<sup>290</sup> Thorstein Veblen, *The Theory of the Leisure Class* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1973), 57.

<sup>291</sup> Mihaly Csikszentimihalyi, "Why We Need Things," in *History from Things*, ed. Steven Lubar and W. David Kingery (DC: Smithsonian Institution, 1993), 23.



hoped, and, thus, the Annapolitan's role in the wine-bibbing ritual still remains inconclusive. It would be beneficial to conduct a more extensive study including a few additional early American cities to see whether the patterns of behavior remained consistent in each location.

Future research should also include a more comprehensive examination of inventories in order to systematically compare the numbers of pieces of equipage listed in gentlemen's estates. Although some of this is addressed in this paper, evidence from an even larger group of inventories may help to answer the following questions: Who had a full range of accoutrements, and what exactly constituted a full range? Did it mean that the individual not only needed a certain assemblage of wine-related objects but also a certain amount of wine in storage? One problem with this requirement is that because wine was a consumable item, we would never know if an individual had merely run out of his supply of wine shortly before his death and was simply waiting for another shipment.

It would also be beneficial to have another examination involving probate inventories that would compare the numbers of pieces of wine and tea equipage owned by individuals. A fair amount is known about the tea ritual, but, similar to wine, little is known of who could perform it properly. It is accepted by scholars that both tea and wine rituals were carried out by the upper class, but it is not definitely known whether tea accessories appeared more often in aspiring households than wine-related accoutrements. Many of the inventories I examined to date, in particular the ones I

would label as belonging to an “aspiring” household, do appear to list more tea-related items than wine. This, in addition to the various letter and journal entries, leads me to believe that, in fact, the consumption of tea was slightly more universal than that of wine. Contemporary written materials often note the popularity of tea, but rarely is any detail given to the types or quality of the tea, as is the case with wine. Tea equipage may have been a definition of status but those who had an array of luxurious wine equipage may have defined themselves at an even higher level of society. Additionally, very little information is available on the consumption of wine in the lower class; yet, this does not mean that researchers should stop searching for it.

Another important study would be to investigate the servants’ roles in the ritual, for this activity may have provided a different type of rapport between the master and his servant than with other household duties. In addition to the butler’s responsibilities of overseeing the footmen and taking care of the expensive items related to dining, he often worked beside the master when decanting the wines down in the wine cellar or up in the Madeira garret. Furthermore, I would like to continue to examine architectural spaces throughout the East Coast to compare the similarities and differences of these barrel-vaulted rooms and to locate more evidence of Madeira storage in garrets.

The role merchants played in procuring the material culture associated with wine bibbing is a subject related to the topic of this paper that is in need of further study.

Additionally, the function of clubs in providing another setting for the pursuit of wine consumption could be explored. How did these more public spaces affect the goals of the gentlemen consuming this beverage? And, finally, because they provide direct evidence of wine consumption, an in-depth study could be made of all the known wine bottle seals that exist with an American's name or coat of arms on it.

Given all of these related components to the ritualistic consumption of imported wine, scholars can continue to broaden their understanding of early American culture on many levels with this one diverse subject matter. Imported wine's rise from an expensive beverage in the 1600s to a powerful commodity in the 1700s influenced the social fate of many early American gentlemen, for its consumption established a recognizable distinction between classes. This distinction, though underappreciated for many years, can now become part of the history of early America's growing society.

Appendix A  
Origins of Wines Mentioned  
(and their various spellings in historical documents)

Madeiras

London Madeira

Memsey, Malmsey, or Malmsea

Other Spanish and Portuguese Wines

Canary – wine from Canary Islands and Azores

Carcavelos, Carcavella, or Calcavelli – fortified wine from vineyards near Lisbon,  
Portugal

Catalonia – wine from the north-eastern province of Spain

Fayal – wine from the Portuguese island of Faial in the Azores

Lisbon – red and white table wines from vineyards near capital of Portugal

Minorca – wine from the Spanish island of Minorca

Mountain or Malaga – dessert wine from Spain

Port – fortified wine from Portugal

Sherry or Sack – fortified golden wine from Spain

St. George – wine from Portugal

St. Lucar – wine from the Canary Island of Tenerife

Teneriffe – wine from the Canary Island of Tenerife

French Wines

Barsac – sweet wine from Bordeaux region

Burgundy – red wine from Bordeaux region

Champagne

Chateau Margaux – red wine from the Bordeaux region

Claret – English name for red wine briefly fermented from Bordeaux region

Côte Rôtie – red wine we now know as Côtes du Rhône

Frontiniac, Fontemack, Frontenaic, or Frontenac

Grave – white wine from Bordeaux region

Lafite – red wine from Bordeaux region

Medoc – wine from area north of Bordeaux

Muscat – sweet dessert wines, often fortified

German Wines

Hock – English name for any German wine made along the Rhine River

Rhenish – white wine from Rhine River Valley region

Hungarian Wines

Tokay – strong, usually sweet wine

## Appendix B

### Wine and Its Equipage in a Sampling of Annapolis Probate Inventories<sup>292</sup>

#### *Wine and Objects*

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>John Brice</b>                                   | <b>Inventory Taken: 1 May 1767; Entered 2 August 1767</b> |
| 6 Decanters   | 0.15.0  |
| 6 qts. Sweet Wine                                   | 0.15.0  |
| 199 qts. Port                                       |   |
| 338 qts. Madeira Wine                               | 53.14.0   |
| Assessed wealth from Annapolis Residence £3,169.7.5 |   |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Richard Chew</b>                                  | <b>Inventory Taken: 30 October 1761</b> |
| 1 Silver Waiter                                      | wt. 7 ozs. 8 dwt.                       |
| 1 Silver Waiter                                      | wt. 15 ozs. 17 dwt. 10 grains           |
| 1 Case & Bottles                                     | 1.0.0                                   |
| 1 Mahogany Cooler with brass Hoops                   | 1.15.0                                  |
| 3 qt Decanters                                       | 0.7.0                                   |
| 1 pint Decanter                                      | 0.1.0                                   |
| 1 Stand with Glasses                                 | 0.8.0                                   |
| 2 tinn Waiters & 1 Mahogany ditto                    | 0.2.6                                   |
| 9 Casks Contg. 100 Galls*                            | 3.12.0                                  |
| 4 do do 30 Each*                                     | 0.16.0                                  |
| 1 cask Contg. 150 Gallons*                           | 0.12.0                                  |
| * Unspecified liquid                                 |   |
| Assessed wealth from Annapolis Residence £5,237.15.6 |   |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Edward Dorsey</b>   | <b>Inventory Taken: 31 October 1761; Entered 14 July 1762</b> |
| Glass ware Consisting of Wine and Jelly Glasses, Tumblers, Cruits, Decanters &c. |   |
|  | 3.15.0  |
| 4 Bottle Stands  | 0.8.0   |
| A Cooler   | 0.4.0   |
| Small Bottle Case broke  | 0.7.6   |
| 50 Gallons Wine in Cask and 14 Gallons in Bottles                                | 32.0.0  |
| Assessed wealth from Annapolis Residence £1,804.3.2                              |   |

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<sup>292</sup> Dining tables and empty bottles or casks are frequently listed in the inventories but have not been included in this study. I also have not corrected the spelling errors in the inventories.

**Daniel Dulany****Inventory Taken: 21 May 1754; Entered 24 July 1764**

|   |         |
|---|---------|
| 1 Salver  | 0.2.6   |
| 49 ¼ lb. of Double Flint Glass                            | 2.9.0   |
| 7 Small Salvors, 2 large Ditto (one large Salver omitted) |         |
| 2 Strainers   |         |
| 2 Decanter handles  |         |
| 153 Bottles of Claret                                     | 22.19.0 |
| 23 Ditto Memsey   | 3.9.0   |
| 30 Ditto Renish   | 4.10.0  |
| 24 Ditto old Bad Port                                     | 18.15.0 |
| 125 ditto Fontemack                                       | 18.15.0 |
| 20 gallons of Madeira Wine                                | 6.0.0   |
| 1 Pipe of Madeira Wine qy 104 Galls                       | 31.4.0  |
| 1 Ditto in which is 24 Do                                 | 7.4.0   |

Assessed wealth from Annapolis Residence £3,062.2.10 ¼

**Robert Eden\*****Inventory Taken: 26 June 1776**

|   |        |
|---|--------|
| 1 Maho: wine cooler with brass hoops & Stands                       | 5.10.0 |
| 1 Sideboard Table with Marble Slab vased with dove coulour'd Marble | 15.0.0 |
| 1 Maho: case with 6 flint Bottles                                   | 5.0.0  |
| 7 ½ doz Wine Glasses  | 3.9.0  |
| 11 Quart Decanters with ground Stoppers                             | 4.2.6  |
| 4 pint Decanters with ground Stoppers                               | 1.0.0  |
| 4 Leather Decanter stands   | 0.17.6 |
| 1 Silver Wine Strainer  | 0.12.0 |

\* No wine is listed but it was probably consumed before he returned to England or was divided among the appraisers

Assessed wealth from Annapolis Residence £2,808.8.0

**Joseph Galloway****Inventory Taken: 1 January 1753; Entered 9 April 1754**

|   |        |
|---|--------|
| 5 Decanters 3 Doz & 3 Glasses and tumblers  | 2.0.0  |
| 3 Small Casks with abt. 2 Gal. Madeira Wine | 1.4.0  |
| 2 Chests 6 Doz. Quart & pint Bottles        | 1.16.0 |
| 3 Gal. Red & White Wine in Bottles          | 1.17.9 |
| 3 Gall. Canary in Do.                       | 0.17.0 |

Assessed wealth from Annapolis Residence £1,821.4.8

**John Morton Jordon**      **Inventory Taken: 11 October 1771; Entered 1 December 1773**

|  |        |
|--|--------|
| 4 Doz. and 1 Bottle Madeira Wine           | 6.2.0  |
| 16 Bottles of old Clarrett                 | 2.8.0  |
| 4 Doz and five Bottles of Port Wine        | 6.12.6 |
| 6 Pipes Madeira Wine                       | 48.0.0 |
| 1 ¼ Cask Malmsey Wine 2/3 full             | 4.0.0  |
| 38 Bottles Containing very bad Lisbon Wine | 1.5.4  |
| 2 Pipes Madeira Wine at 44£ each           | 88.0.0 |
| 4 Glass Decanter                           | 0.18.0 |
| 3 ½ Doz. Wine Punch and Beer Glass         | 1.8.0  |
| 2 Cork Screws                              | 0.2.0  |
| 1 old India Bottle Slide                   | 0.0.6  |
| 3 Quart Decanters                          | 0.6.0  |

Assessed wealth from Annapolis Residence £1,820.15.8

**Philip Thomas Lee**      **Inventory Taken: 30 July 1780; Entered 8 December 1789**

|   |      |        |
|---|------|--------|
| 1 Large Mahogany Wine Cooler bound with brass | Sold | 5.0.0  |
| 1 Tin Funnel                                  | Sold | 0.0.4  |
| 2 small Waiters                               | Sold | 0.7.6  |
| 1 Large Cork Screw                            | Sold | 0.0.9  |
| 1 tin funnel                                  | Sold | 0.1.6  |
| 1 pewter funnel                               |      | 0.2.6  |
| 1 Cooler                                      | Sold | 0.3.9  |
| 10 Wine Glasses                               | Sold | 0.3.9  |
| 1 half gallon decanter                        | Sold | 0.7.6  |
| 4 Genteel quart decanters                     | Sold | 1.5.0  |
| 2 broken decanters                            | Sold | 0.3.0  |
| 1 pint decanter                               | Sold | 0.1.6  |
| 3 bottle stands                               | Sold | 0.3.0  |
| 19 Cut Wine Glasses                           | Sold | 0.15.0 |
| 5 Table decanters                             | Sold | 1.15.0 |
| 2 plain quart wine Glasses decanters          | Sold | 0.8.0  |

Assessed wealth from Annapolis Residence £1,548.15.3

|                              |        |
|------------------------------|--------|
| 3 Cork screws                | 0.6.0  |
| 14 doz. 6 bott. Madeira wine | 25.7.6 |
| 6 bottles sweet wine         | 0.12.0 |
| 3 double bottles Burgundy    | 0.12.0 |
| 4 bottles Hock               | 0.12.0 |
| 3 bottles Red wine           | 0.6.0  |

Assessed wealth from Charles County Residence £405.24.6

**Edmund Rutland****Inventory Taken: 1765**

|   |        |
|---|--------|
| 1 Dum Waiter  | 0.10.0 |
| 20 Wine Glasses   | 0.6.0  |
| 1 quart Decanter, 1 Pint Decanter                         | 0.3.0  |
| 17 Bottles Claret, 11 Bottles Port Wine, 9 Bottles Lisbon | 1.17.0 |

Assessed wealth from Annapolis Residence £801.17.1

\* Rare instance of an individual whose assessed wealth is under 1,800 pounds but who has both wine in storage (albeit a small amount) and wine-related objects (although they are of little value).

**Thomas Stone****Inventory Taken: 3 January 1788; Entered: 31 March 1788**

|   |        |
|---|--------|
| 17 wine glasses broken setts, 9 decanters, some damaged | 1.15.0 |
| 4 gilt paper decanter stands                            |        |
| 4 Japaned waiters                                       |        |
| 1 Pipe Madeira Wine                                     | 90.0.0 |
| 4 bottles wine 30 do Hock 6 do Claret                   | 6.0.0  |

Assessed wealth from Annapolis Residence £1,150.8.1

Plus Assessed wealth from Charles County Res. £1,515.2.0

*Objects Only***James Brice****Inventory Taken: 25 May 1802; Entered 22 October 1802**

|  |      |
|--|------|
| 1 Liquor Case  | 1.00 |
| 13 Waiters of different Sizes, mostly very old                     | 2.00 |
| 95 Pieces of Glass Consisting of Tumblers, Wine, and Jelly Glasses | 8.00 |
| 7 Glass Decanters  | 1.50 |

Assessed wealth from Annapolis Residence \$1,576.26

**Benjamin Kennedy****Inventory Taken: 11 September 1778**

|                           |        |
|---------------------------|--------|
| 2 Leather Bottle Stands   | 0.3.0  |
| 1 flower'd Glass Decanter | 0.2.0  |
| 11 flower'd Wine Glasses  | 0.11.0 |
| 7 plain Wine Glasses      |        |
| 1 Jappanned Waiter        |        |

Assessed wealth from Annapolis Residence £854.19.8



|  |   |        |
|--|---|--------|
| <b>Aquila Paca</b>                                   | <b>Inventory Taken: 14 September 1789</b> |        |
| 1 large Waiter                                       |   | 1.15.0 |
| 2 small Waiters                                      |   | 1.0.0  |
| 2 [?] Waiters  |   | 1.2.0  |
| 1 Doz. Wine Glasses                                  |   | 1.9.0  |
| 5 small Goblets                                      |   | 0.5.0  |
| 3 Decanters  |   | 0.15.0 |
| 2 old Funnels  |   | 1.1.0  |
| Assessed wealth from Annapolis Residence £1,401.13.6 |   |        |

|  |  |        |
|--|--|--------|
| <b>Joseph Pemberton</b>                              | <b>Inventory Entered: 11 December 1783</b> |        |
| 1 Bottle Case  |  | 0.15.0 |
| 1 japand Cooler                                      |  | 2.5.0  |
| 4 large japand Waiters                               |  | 2.0.0  |
| 3 japand Waiters                                     |  | 0.11.3 |
| 12 cut Wine Glasses                                  |  | 0.12.0 |
| 10 Decanters   |  | 2.0.0  |
| 4 Bottle Stands                                      |  | 0.12.0 |
| 2 Bottle Cases with 4 Galls French Brandy            |  | 2.5.0  |
| Assessed wealth from Annapolis Residence £1,540.2.10 |  |        |

## Appendix C

### Historic Houses Visited

#### District of Columbia

Octagon House  
Decatur House

#### Maryland

Charles Carroll House  
Chase-Lloyd House  
Folly Quarter  
Hammond-Harwood House  
Hampton National Historic Site  
Homewood House  
John Brice House  
James Brice House  
John Ridout House  
Paca House  
Riversdale  
Upton-Scott House  
Whitehall  
Widehall

#### Massachusetts

Gore Place  
Jeremiah Lee House  
Shirley-Eustis House  
Longfellow National Historic Site

#### New Hampshire

Moffatt-Ladd House  
Wendell House  
Wentworth House  
Rundlett-May House

#### Pennsylvania

Cliveden  
Henry Hill/Physick House  
Mount Pleasant  
Solitude  
Stenton  
The Woodlands

South Carolina

Drayton Hall

Aiken-Rhett House

Heyward-Washington House

Joseph Manigault House

Nathaniel Russell House

Virginia

Blandfield

John Marshall House

Monticello

Sabine Hall

Stratford Hall

Wickham-Valentine House

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Drayton Hall, South Carolina:

Charles Drayton's Diary, 1785-1820

Historical Society of Pennsylvania:

Invitation to William Hamilton's 1783, Pemberton Collection, Volume 39

The Library of Virginia:

Severn Eyre Letter, 1763, Call #38611

Maryland Historical Society [MHS]:

Lloyd Papers 1658-1910, MS 2001

Lloyd Papers Daybook 1770-1780, MS 2001

Papers, 1793-1824 [Hugh Thompson], MS 990

Maryland State Archives [MSA]:

Prerogative Court Inventories, Volume 57

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Prerogative Court Inventories, Volume 84

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Anne Arundel County Register of Wills (Inventories), MSA C88-2

Anne Arundel County Register of Wills (Inventories), MSA C88-17

Anne Arundel County Testamentary Papers, Box 4

Anne Arundel County Testamentary Papers, Box 55

Talbot County Register of Wills (Inventories), Volume JPF

Charles County Register of Wills (Inventories), MSA CM386-9

Charles County Register of Wills (Inventories), MSA CM386-10

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